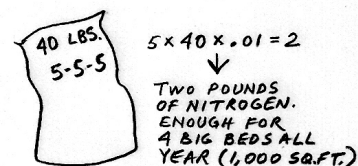
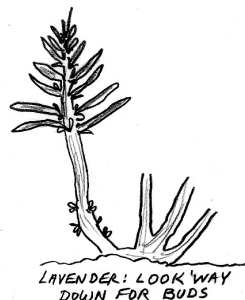
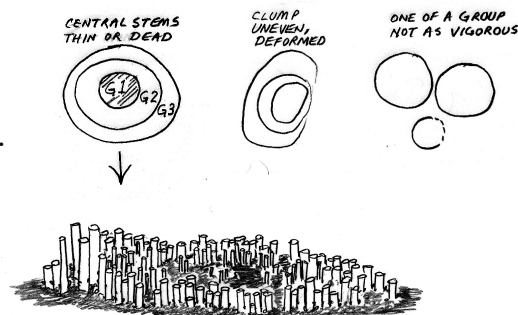


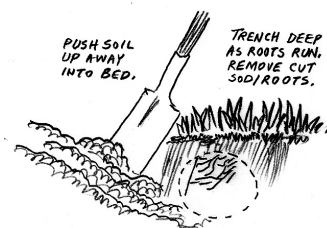
## Getting the Garden Ready for Spring (Or: Don't Miss early April!)

### A. Early April - sharp tools, sharp eyes

1. Prune the woodies:
  - a) To keep it small? Cut *before budbreak* or wait til August.
  - b) To promote vigorous new growth: Cut hard, now!
2. Cut down the previous year's herbaceous debris
  - a) For looks, sanitation; easier working in bed
    - Or not -- birds, good bugs like debris...
  - b) How far to cut:
    - Deciduous and only-its-leaves-are-evergreen -- can be razed
    - Woody evergreens -- shear or clip to above green buds
  - c) Things to look for as you work
    - Pest and disease problems
    - Overgrown plants
    - Weed hot spots
  - d) Such a puzzle: Naming the plants from old stem, spread, root...
    - A word about tags
3. Rake out debris: Visibility is the objective. Do *not* remove all mulch.
4. Spread fertilizer before edging and weeding - gets mixed in as you go.
  - a) In place now, supports the season of most rapid top growth
    - Fertilizers don't cause growth, as vitamins don't cause child to grow.
  - b) What kind, how much?
    - Calculate 1-2 pounds of nitrogen (N) per 1,000 sq. ft.
    - First number on label is percent N  
that number x weight x .01 = lbs. of N in the bag
    - 1-1-1 ratio (such as 10-10-10, 5-5-5...) or per soil test
    - Best: slow release organic \_\_\_\_\_



5. Edge the bed: Cut an air edge or verify soundness of existing hard edge
  - a) Of critical importance - the edge is the biggest weed in the garden
  - b) Cutting: Use a sharp spade.
    - Slice as deep as invading roots
    - Loosen and lift slice, working in toward bed center
  - c) Make the edge sound.
    - Chase individual roots into bed



6. Weed the bed
  - a) Fanatically! No bigger time saving over a season.
    - Focus on established weeds, not seedlings
    - Make sure there's a no-man's-land between desirable plants
    - Routing an established weed patch: Begin from center of colony.
  - b) Sharp eye for trouble as you weed
    - Plants that need dividing, since our own good plants can be weeds
    - What weed roots look like -- root system form, method of spreading

## 7. Divide plants and improve soil!

### a) Priorities

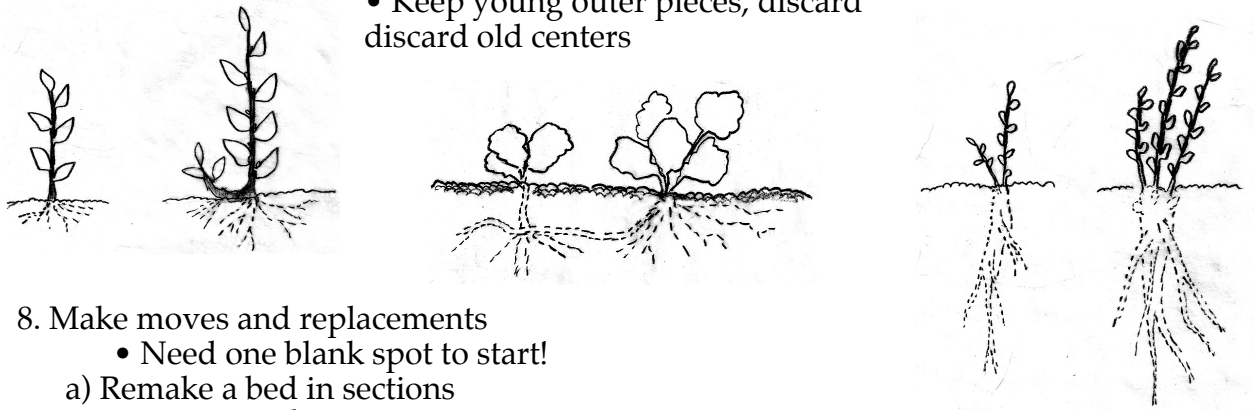
- Plants that must be lifted to remove weed roots
- Evergreens and fast growing, cool weather deciduous types
- Aggressive spreaders
- Plants showing their age in reduced growth, bloom and health.

### b) Division's not essential but good to do:

- Divided plant = young = vigorous, fast, full-blooming and *in place*
- We do like to change!

### c) How? Look at roots - they tell. Offset (left), runner (c), taproot (right)

- Keep young outer pieces, discard discard old centers



## 8. Make moves and replacements

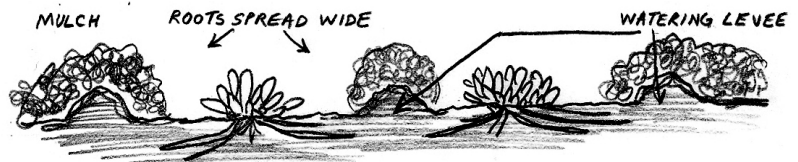
- Need one blank spot to start!

### a) Remake a bed in sections

- Rake mulch aside, return it after working
- Remove all plants in area to be divided, then loosen soil 8-18" deep
- Add compost equal in volume to root balls removed
- Level the area and plant new, or re-plant divisions
- Plant to spotlight plant features other than flower, and focal points
- Make watering levee, water in each plant

### b) Transplanting tip (divisions and bare root new plants)

- Spread roots wide, neighbors shouldn't touch.
- Leave more room than you think a plant will need
- Frame focal point plants with significant-difference plants or features



### d) Plant tips (new plants in pots)

- Slice root bound plants -- slice bottom off, sides up

## 9. Mulch: Suppress weeds, conserve moisture, encourage roots, renew soil, look good

### a) 2-3" deep if leafy; 1-2" deep if woody

### b) Materials

- Leafy: grass clippings, fall leaves, straw, coco hulls
- Woody : bark, shredded wood
- Other: newspaper, carpet, stone...
- No weed mats

## 10. Plant cool season annuals, bare root- and field grown perennials, containers!

## 11. Record work done and planned for "next time." It's wonderful to have what you need, know your goals when you come out next time, in May!