

Shop wisely with Auntie Money

WAYS TO SAVE ON PLANTING

By Angela Nsimbi

My love affair with Maua & More began a year ago on Facebook. Fast forward, a year later, I get to watch Lillian Katiso engage with a client, in Kyanja, a Kampala suburb, who had come to shop for plants. This client kept asking questions such as; 'How will the stiletto planters look like on either side of the entrance to my home?'

This pleasant engagement depicted that I was on the right track with regard to my quest on what to look out for when shopping for plants. Katiso, a creative gardener cum accountant, explains: "For the budget buyer, it is important for the shopper to ask, 'Why do I want to buy the plant?'"

For instance, planting rosemary, mint, sage and coriander is practical. One can buy coriander from the market at sh1,000 and plant some. You are able to get spices, which saves on your kitchen budget. Harvesting from your garden is great because nothing beats something fresh."

You can also grow vegetables such as spinach and kale (*sukuma wiki*). Since one can harvest spinach twice a week and *Sukuma wiki* twice to thrice a week, this implies a constant supply of vegetables.

PLANT SHOPPER'S GUIDE

When shopping for plants, Katiso employs the 5Fs as tips. These are flowers, fruits, fragrance, flavour and fresh air.

A plant that flowers is high maintenance because one needs to prune regularly, but it gives you a beautiful environment. Plants that give you fruit also help you cut down on your budget for fruits. You may grow strawberries, passion fruit and mangoes or paw paws.

You might want a scented environment, here is when the fragrance plants come in handy. For instance; the scent from jasmine and lime grass is pleasant and also repels mosquitoes.

Plants with flavour can be used to spice your tea, food or juice. Plant for fresh air, are air purifiers and add freshness indoors because these are indoor plants. For instance; a peace lily is an air purifier plant. Plants cost from sh10,000. With this basic knowledge step out and enjoy your shopping.

1

Use what you have. Katiso used her old bathtub to grow strawberries. Instead of throwing it away it became a creative option.

2

Grow medicinal plants such as aloe vera. Using a few drops of this plant on a wound helps it heal faster.

3

To cut down on fumigation costs, plant snake repellent plants such as society garlic or pink agapanthus (*tulbaghia violacea*)

4

Before buying a plant, ask about how to maintain it. For instance; indoor plants which do well in shades wither when exposed to direct sunlight.



Society garlic helps repel snakes



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