It’s tomato season!
Summer seems to be everyone’s favorite season for gardening thanks to the juicy and bountiful tomato! Have you caged your tomatoes in the past and found them difficult to harvest, or do you want to try a new technique? Follow along with Arlene’s tips for staking and pruning, and implementing these simple steps in your home garden will help you avoid messy and bushy looking tomato plants, helping you to properly train them to yield numerous and healthy fruit!

1. Start with your nursery transplant.
2. Pinch off the four lowest nodes.
3. Plant the transplant deep in the ground, covering the pinched-off nodes. The roots will grow at these points. The remaining branches left above ground become the leaders.
4. Insert the stake on the north side so it doesn't cast a shadow onto the plant. Bury it 1 to 2 feet below the soil level, leaving 6 feet above the soil level.

5. Choose one main leader and two side leaders. Pinch off any suckers that grow in the “armpits” of the leaders.*

*When pruning tomatoes try not to use scissors as they can transmit diseases from plant to plant.

6. Tie the plant to the stake using a ∞ shaped knot. Never tie the knot directly under a flower stalk because as the plant grows the weight of the fruit can cause the stem to break at the weakened point.