

Good Sh*t

If you'd want to drink it, eat it, wear it, ride it, or drive it, if it'd be cool to see, listen to or do, we're writing about it.



picture source

GARDEN

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cultivate with koubachi?

How to Keep Your Plants Alive — With an App

April 09, 2014. By Vignesh Ramachandran

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Why you should care

Because you don't need a green thumb this summer — just some technology.

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Some days, I can barely remember to hydrate myself enough – much less a plant. So for folks like me who weren't graced with a green thumb, a little technology can help us get outside to successfully garden this spring.

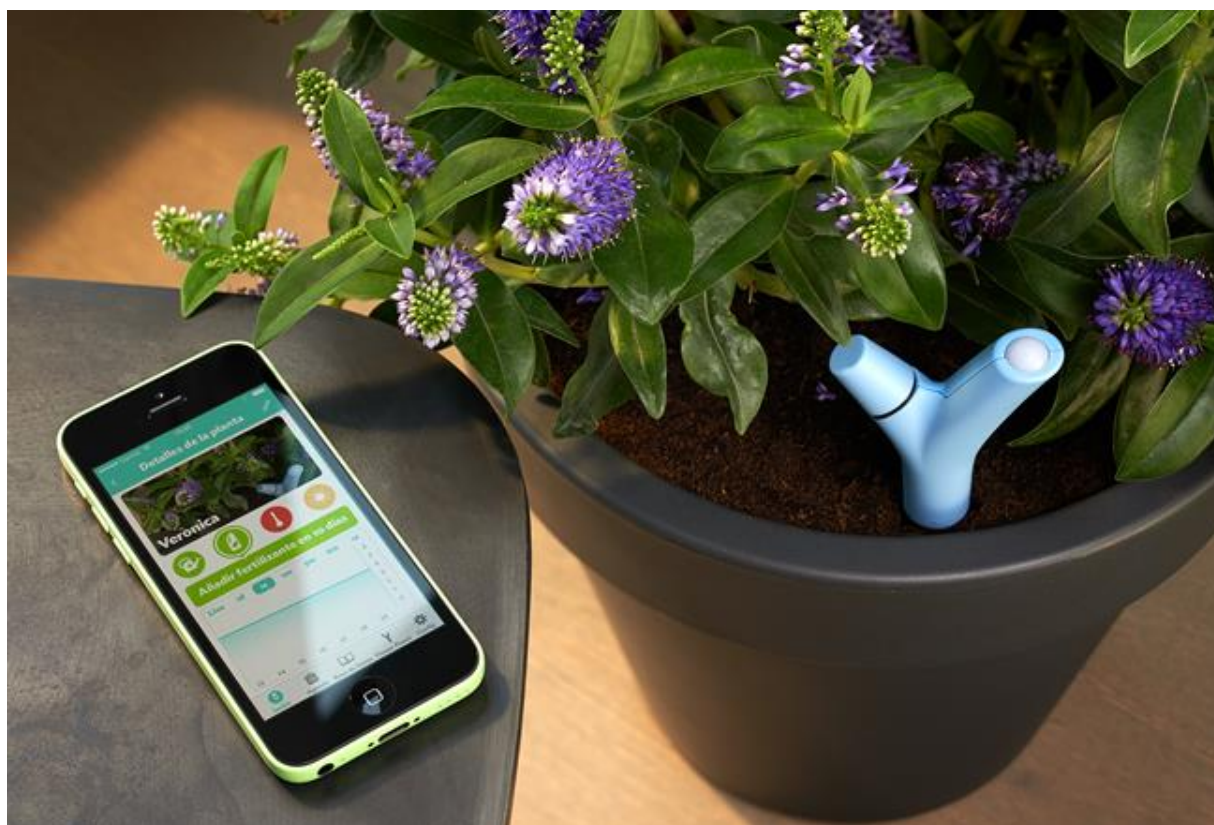
Getting the water and sunlight just right is always a challenge when trying to grow some veggies or flowers. Too much — your plant gets overwhelmed. Too little — your plant shrivels, along with your gardening confidence.

Enter the tech saviors.

GARDENING 101

A tool like the [Koubachi Wi-Fi Plant Sensor](http://www.koubachi.com/features/sensor?locale=en) [http://www.koubachi.com/features/sensor?locale=en] notifies you when it's time to water or fertilize and determines whether the plants are located in an area with ideal temperature and light. Just stick the short-golf-club-looking sensor (\$99 for indoor version, \$129 for outdoor version) in your plant soil and pair it with the Koubachi app for iOS, Android (beta) or Web. The system factors in needs of the specific plant species that you specify. Call it a knowledgeable babysitter.

A competitor to the Koubachi is the [Parrot Flower Power](http://www.parrot.com/flowerpower/us/) [http://www.parrot.com/flowerpower/us/]. The \$60 gadget — which looks like a pair of antlers — is also placed inside your plant's soil. Paired with an iOS app, this device communicates via Bluetooth to provide real-time monitoring of the ambient temperature, light intensity and soil humidity. With that automated information, you can adjust your gardening habits accordingly.

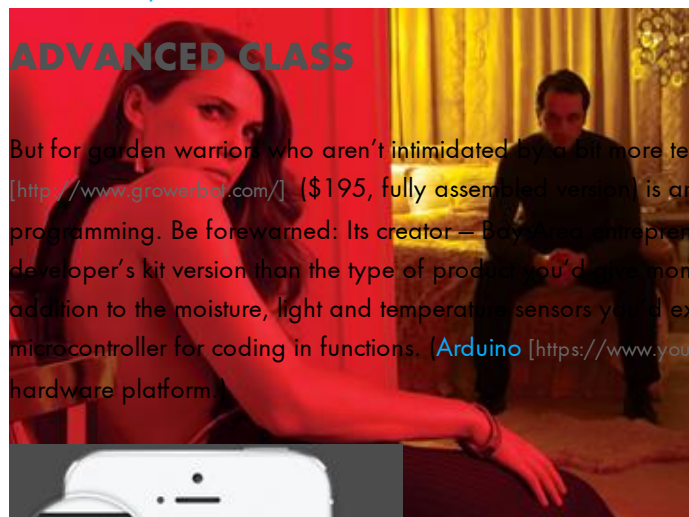


Parrot Flower Power

If you live in a concrete jungle and don't have outdoor space, Click and Grow's \$100 [Smart Herb Garden](http://www.clickandgrow.com/products/smart-herb-garden-pre-order) [http://www.clickandgrow.com/products/smart-herb-garden-pre-order] is self-sufficient indoors with its built-in sensors. All you have to do is fill Click and Grow's water reservoir, plug it in and the system manages itself to allow the plants to grow to full

size in about two to four months. You can't completely forget about it: The water tank has to be refilled approximately once a month.

This class of gadget is stuff you can train grandma on: If you can set up something as simple as a Fitbit fitness band, you can dig in.



But for garden warriors who aren't intimidated by a bit more techie grit, the [Growerbot social gardening assistant](http://www.growerbot.com/) (\$195, fully assembled version) is an advanced choice that can involve soldering and special programming. Be forewarned: Its creator — Bay Area entrepreneur Luke Iseman — says the Growerbot is more of a developer's kit version than the type of product you'd expect from a consumer (he's currently working on a user-friendlier version). In addition to the moisture, light and temperature sensors you'd expect, the unit comes with an Arduino-compatible microcontroller for coding in functions. [Arduino](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqrqqphxc) is an open-source hardware platform.



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"You will have plants that don't look like the stuff on the cover of the gardening magazines, and then eventually you'll have some random stuff that works," Iseman warns gardening newbies.

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And for those whose garden is more lawn than neglected office plant, the new [Lono](https://lonoapp.com/) sprinkler system lets you control watering from a smartphone. The \$200 sprinkler controller can automatically delay watering if it's raining in your area, and the app enables zone control if you have lots of grass.

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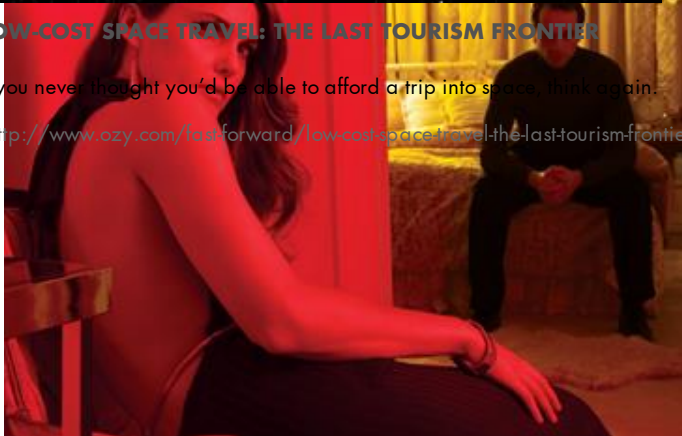
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