

The HERShovel: For Women, By Women, Pink Not Included

by Janet Hall

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Until I stumbled upon Green Heron Tools, I thought all gardening tools were created equal. Gardening tools marketed to women just meant shades of pink and mint and plenty of florals. Not so, say Ann Adams and Liz Brensinger, the founders of Green Heron Tools, the first company dedicated to providing gardening tools and equipment specially designed for women. According to Adams and Brensinger, most gardening tools are made with men, or at least with man-sized bodies and man-sized strength, in mind. These two farmers set out to change that. The result? The HERShovel, a tool designed for women, by women.

The basic tenet behind [Green Heron Tools](#) is that because women's bodies are different from men's, their tools should be too. They explain that in general women have 40- to 75-percent less upper body strength than men. As a result, women rely on their lower body strength to power tools. With narrower shoulders, wider hips, and smaller grips, women's bodies have different ergonomic needs. Equipped with a USDA grant, Adams and Brensinger curated a collection of female-body-friendly tools—available for purchase through the [Green Heron Tool Online Store](#)—and designed their own shovel specifically engineered to capture the strength of a woman's body.



Above: The [HERShovel](#) is \$64.99 through Green Heron Tools.

How does the [HERShovel](#) differ from the run-of-the-mill garden shovel? It isn't just about downsizing. Designed as a hybrid of a shovel and a spade for versatility, the [HERShovel](#) weighs in at light 4.5 pounds and features an angled blade to complement a woman's digging style. Its D-shaped handle accommodates two hands and is tilted for added leverage. The smaller grip is textured for secure handling.



Above: For the most ergonomic fit, the ash shaft of the [HERShovel](#) comes in three sizes according to the user's height. The small is for women 5 feet 2 inches and under, the medium for women 5 feet 2 inches to 5 feet 7 inches, and the large is designed for women who are 5 feet 7 inches and taller.



Above: Made to be used with female leg-power in mind, the [HERShovel](#) features a larger than normal foot tread.



Above: Green Heron offers ergonomic grips to enhance the usability of tools you already own. The [Motus D-Grip](#) mounts mid-way down the garden tool handle and gives more lifting leverage; \$13.



Above: The lightweight [BAHCO Expert Telescoping Bypass Lopper](#) is an example of the female-friendly garden tools on offer in the [Green Heron Online Store](#). Made in France, they weigh in at only 2.5 pounds. According to the Green Heron site, the loppers are well-balanced and feature comfortable grips, a fully-hardened blade made of high-grade steel, and a special locking system that locks or unlocks with just a quarter-turn, allowing the user to easily adjust the handle length; \$85.



Above: The [Korean Handplow \(also known as EZ Digger or Ho-Mi\)](#) is another mainstay in their collection; \$17.99.