

Product Review:

Radius NRG Digging Spade

January 1, 2013 by Monica Hemingway

<http://gardeningproductsreview.com/>

I'm usually pretty sceptical about so-called "ergonomic" gardening tools. They're usually just the same old tool but with a bent handle (which makes it almost impossible to hold the tool comfortably) or some sort of add-on attachment (which promptly falls off or breaks). But when I saw the NRG Pro Digging Tools from Radius Garden Products, I thought I'd give the spade a try.

You may have noticed the Radius tools – it's hard to miss the big "O"-shaped and bright green handles. Radius Garden Products introduced the NRG line of hand tools several years ago but only recently brought out digging and long-handled tools. "NRG" stands for "natural radius grip." This is the large "O"-shaped handle that allows your wrist to be held in a more natural position while the large muscles of your arms can use their full strength and power for gardening. The large size of the handle, with four times the gripping surface of traditional tools, also means that you've got many options for hand positions and you don't have to squeeze so hard to hold the tool. While I'll admit that it does look and feel a little odd at first, I noticed after a while that my [carpal tunnel](#) problems were greatly minimized using this innovative handle design. In fact, I've been pleasantly surprised with the tool's comfort, strength, and ease of use.

One of the other features I really appreciate is the bright handle color – it's hard to misplace a tool that practically glows in the dark!

In addition, the extra large steps are set relatively high and fold forward (rather than backward, which is what you find on most shovels or spades) which makes it easier to get your foot fully on it and put more weight into driving the spade into the ground.

The stainless steel spade has a steel-reinforced, resin-encased shaft and seamless socket, and like the other NRG Pro Radius digging tools, is guaranteed for life. After snapping a shovel in half last fall (and [almost impaling myself on the shaft](#)), it's good to find a tool that will dig up my Joe Pye Weed without turning me into the latest casualty of under-strength gardening tools. Simply put, it's easier to dig deeper and faster with the Radius Digging Spade than with any other spade I've used.

The one drawback to this spade is that it's rather heavy compared to wooden or other composite shovels. For a long day in the garden, I'd choose something lighter and less tiring. However, for a tough [job](#) where I know I'll be putting a lot of weight against it, I'd rather have the Radius spade than a wooden one !