

Spring Onions

Choose a variety such as White Lisbon, which can be grown in containers and can provide salad onions for up to 6 months of the year.

Sowing Time

March onwards.

How to Grow

Choose a sunny position with good drainage plant into a 10" container or growbag. This salad onion is fast growing and silvery skinned. It can be grown in a small area with no problems. A soil-based compost or multi-purpose compost mixed with some loam and apply a general fertiliser prior to sowing. Sow thinly about 1/2" deep, with these it is possible to sow little and often to provide salad onions for a good 6 months of the year. Unlike normal onions these can be used straight after pulling. Pull as required.



Spinach

Spinach can be grown quite happily in containers. Also beetroot and leaf beet (perpetual spinach) is also fine grown this way. The leaves can be harvested young to be used in salads.

Sowing Time

March-May and August-September

How to Grow

Use a good fertile soil or compost, which has had a good general feed added. Choose a site with partial shade to reduce the risk of running to seed. Sow winter spinach and New Zealand spinach in a sunny spot. Plant into containers, growbags or old boxes. Sow thinly and cover with about 1" of soil on top. Water well during dry periods. Start picking as soon as the leaves have reached a reasonable size. Always start with the outer leaves, which should be at the young and tender stage.

Potatoes

All potatoes are fine grown in bags or containers. There is a lot of choice in the garden shop. First or Second Earlies would be best grown in a bag. Maincrop can be grown in one of the larger bins. Mound up by adding extra soil as the tips start to show.



Planting Time

First Earlies Second Earlies Maincrop
Late March Early to Mid April Mid-late April

Planting

When you obtain your seed potatoes in February set them out (shoots uppermost) in egg boxes or wooden containers containing 1" dry peat. Store in a light (not sunny) frost-free position and in about 6 weeks there will be several sturdy 1/2" – 1" shoots. Do not damage any of these sprouts. Chitting is useful for potatoes but is not essential. Water liberally in dry weather, this is important once the tubers have started to form. Plant the potatoes 5" deep 12 – 15" apart depending on whether it is First Earlies or Maincrop. Plant about halfway into the bin or if using a bag roll it down half way and roll it up gradually as the plants grow. With both of these add soil as the shoots appear at the top. This will have the same effect as earthing up and should supply you with a larger crop of potatoes.

Harvesting

With earlies wait until the flowers or buds whither. Then carefully remove soil from a small part of the ridge and examine the tubers. They are ready for harvesting when they are the size of a hen's egg. With Maincrops cut off the withered stems, remove them and wait for 10 days. Then lift the roots and let the tubers dry out for several hours. For storage place them into a wooden box and store them in a dark frost-free room or shed, where they should keep until spring.

Lettuce

The easiest lettuce to grow in containers would be the cut and come again salad varieties. They supply you with a steady harvest. The soil needs to be neutral-alkaline, have adequate organic matter and to be kept moist throughout the life of the crop. Choose a sunny or lightly shaded site.

Sowing Time

Can be sown throughout the year depending on the variety.

How to Grow

Sow lettuce thinly about 1/2" deep at 4-6 week intervals so that you can have a good succession of crop for a longer period, especially using the cut and come again varieties. Beet leaves and spinach can also be sown this way and the young leaves used in salads.

Thin the seedlings as soon as the first true leaves appear. Water the day before thinning. Continue thinning at intervals until the plants are 12" apart.

Put slug pellets down and protect plants from birds. Hoe regularly and keep unprotected plants watered. Plants undercover should be kept on the dry side.

Always water in the morning.

Cut and come again lettuce does not produce a firm heart so it can be cut as and when you need it. Ideally harvest lettuce first thing in the morning.



Pea

Sugaron is a dwarf variety of pea, which is an early maturing, heavy cropping variety with short, broad, flat tasty pods.

Sowing Time

Sow from mid-March onwards.

How to Grow

Plant into a growbag or large container. Seeds need to be approximately 6" apart and 2" deep in the soil.

They require adequate humus in the soil and a non-acid soil.

Avoid too much fertiliser. Immediately

after sowing you must protect from birds.

Use black cotton stretched around a support or branches over the surface of the container.

When the plants are 3" tall, push in twigs as a support otherwise slugs may cause damage.



Water well during dry spells in summer.

A pod is ready for picking when it is well filled, but while there is still a little air space between each pea. Harvest from the bottom of the stem up. Use two hands one to hold the stem and one to pick the pods. Pick regularly. Pods left to mature will reduce your total yield unless you intend to dry them for late use.



How to grow...
In Containers

**SOW IT
GROW IT**

It's simple, easy and fresh

FROSTS


...naturally

Brampton
Buckden Road
Brampton
Huntingdon
01480 453048

Millets Farm
Kingston Road
Frilford, Nr.Abingdon
Oxfordshire
01865 391923

Willington
Sandy Road
Willington
Bedford
01234 838777

Woburn Sands
Newport Road
Woburn Sands
Milton Keynes
01908 583511

Container Grown Vegetables for the Patio

It is possible to grow a lot of different vegetables on the patio eliminating the need for a vegetable plot. This leaflet will guide you through some of the suitable vegetables varieties for containers.

Carrots

Carrot Parmex or early Nantes 5 are short rooted varieties, which are almost round in shape and would be very much at home grown inside a container.

Sowing Time

April-June.

How to Grow

These smaller carrots mature quickly and can be planted in succession to produce a regular crop. They can be grown in a growbag or container. Sow thinly about 1/2" deep. Always read the seed packet prior to planting. Thin out seedlings when they are large enough to handle. The plants should be about 2-3" apart. Take care when thinning or the root ruining carrot fly will be attracted to your garden by the smell of the bruised foliage. Water if dry and thin in the evening. Burn or bury the thinnings. Pull out young carrots as required.



Chillies and Peppers

All Chillies and Peppers are best grown in pots as they do not do well in the open soil. They like the heat and would be happy in the kitchen, conservatory and glass house or against a sunny wall. If you do put them outside be careful of strong winds and heavy rain. Use a general-purpose fertiliser during the initial growing period.



Sowing Time

Sow seed in March. Plant out in June.

How to Grow

Requires fertile well-drained soil, can be planted in a 9" pot in John Innes No3 or 3 plants to a growbag. If grown in pots it is necessary to repot in several stages until the plants are ready to be moved to their permanent container. Mist plants regularly to keep down red spider mite. They may need support if plants become top heavy or unstable. Water regularly, but do not allow the soil to become too wet, soil must be free draining. Add a potassium feed with each watering once the fruits have begun to swell. Pick the fruits as you require them. Peppers can be picked green or wait for them to turn yellow or red. Chillies can also be picked green or wait until they ripen. Just remember the riper the fruit the hotter they become. They can make a rather attractive feature on the kitchen window sill or in the conservatory. Chillies can also be allowed to dry and stored for use later on. When needed use dry or allow to soak in water prior to use.

Cucumbers

The dwarf variety Delta is probably the best grown outside of a greenhouse and near a sunny wall.



Sowing Time

End of May-June.

How to Grow

Plant seedlings in John Innes no.3 compost in 10" pot or growbags. Cucumbers require a sunny spot and protection from strong winds is essential. Soil must be well-drained.

Pinch out growing tip when the plants have developed 6 or 7 leaves. Side shoots will then develop, and these can be left to trail over the ground or be trained up stout netting. Any shoots not bearing flowers should be pinched out at the 7th leaf.

Keep soil moist. Water around the plants, not over them. Mist lightly in dry weather. Place black polythene over the soil in summer before fruit formation. This will raise the soil temperature, conserve moisture, keep down weeds and protect the fruits from rot. Once the fruits have started to swell, feed with liquid tomato fertiliser. Fertilisation is essential, use male flowers to pollinate fruiting flowers before they are discarded. Female fruits can be recognised by the small fruit behind the flower head.



French Beans

Dwarf french beans are good to grow in a pot. Varieties such as Masterpiece, Purple Queen, Safari, Sprite, Tendergreen or the Prince would all grow happily in a container or growbag.

Sowing Time

May-June.

How to Grow

French beans will grow in any reasonable soil providing it is neither heavy nor acid. Pick a reasonably sunny spot, which is sheltered from high winds.

Sow seeds 2" deep approx 4" apart into a 10" pot or even a growbag. Protect from slugs and support with small pea sticks to prevent them from toppling over. Keep the root area moist at all times to ensure pod development and a longer cropping period. Water regularly if the weather turns dry during or after the flowering period. Mulching around the stems would help keep the moisture in. Once pods have been harvested, apply a liquid feed and a second crop may be obtained.

Runner Beans

The best variety to grow on the patio is Hestia. It is a dwarf variety, which is disease resistant, bearing heavy crops of stringless high quality beans and attractive flowers which make a charming addition to the flower garden. However, you can still grow the larger varieties in a wide pot and with an obelisk or wigwam for support.

Sowing Time

Sow in May.

How to Grow

Plant into good fertile, well-drained non-acid compost or soil. Pick a sheltered but sunny position. Again these can be grown in several different containers. Pots are good or even hanging baskets. Sow seed 2" deep and 6" apart. 5 plants would be ample in a hanging basket. Pick regularly once the pods have reached a decent size. But before the beans inside have started to swell. Beans need to be picked every couple of days.



Tomatoes



Outdoor tomatoes are a tender crop so choose a warm spot in front of a south-facing wall if you can. Tomatoes do well grown in containers or bags on the patio or balcony. Plants will need more water and feed if grown this way. Most tomatoes can be grown in a container on the patio, but some of the large varieties do need constant care. There are one or two varieties, which will eliminate a lot of the hard work of taking out side shoots and removing yellow leaves. Stick to varieties such as Totem, a variety bred as a bush tomato, or Tumbler and Tumbling Tom, both brilliant for hanging baskets or containers. It is important to make sure they all receive plenty of water and feed especially when they are fruiting.

Sowing/Planting Time

May-June.

How to Grow

For the trailing varieties you can plant them out into a hanging basket. Three plants would be happy in a large 16" basket. Plant in to a multi-purpose compost, remember to incorporate a plastic liner and some water retaining gel into the soil to reduce the need to water. It may also be wise to add some slow release fertiliser such as Osmocote into the soil, which would help the plants whilst they establish. When planted, water the plants in and cover the top of the container with a thin layer of moss to help with water retention. Use a tomato feed when the first fruits start to form.



Radishes

Radishes are an easy crop to grow which, mature relatively fast. Choose a globular variety such as Scarlet Globe or Sparkler.

Sowing Time

March-June.

How to Grow

Radishes prefer reasonably fertile soil, which is well-drained and rich in humus. Choose a sunny spot for spring sowing, but the summer crop will need some shade, which can be achieved by sowing in between other crops. Decent growing conditions are essential to ensure quick growth for tenderness and flavour.

Cut the top out of the growbag leaving some plastic around the side. Loosen up the soil inside the bag making sure that the crumbs of soil are fine. Alternatively, you can plant them into containers using multi-purpose compost. Sow thinly about 1/2" deep. Thin out plants so that they have 6" between them. Make sure they do not become overcrowded. Water regularly when the weather is hot and dry. Rapid growth is essential to gain a good crop. Pull when the globular types reach the size of a 10p coin.



Upright Tomato Varieties

If an upright (cordon) variety is grown loosely, tie the stem to the cane. Make the ties at 12" intervals as the plant grows. Side shoots will appear where the leaf stalks join the stem. Pinch them out when they are about 1" long. Remove yellowing leaves below fruit trusses as the season progresses, don't overdo the de-leaving process. Water regularly in dry weather to keep soil moist. Alternating dryness with flooding will cause blossom end rot or fruit splitting. Feed regularly with a tomato fertiliser. When small tomatoes have developed on the 4th truss (fruiting stem) remove the tip at 2 leaves above this truss. As with all vegetable seeds, always read the seed packet prior to planting.