



Volunteer gardening group in Sopwell, St Albans. Growing things and connecting community

Here's a list of our YouTube videos and other resources to support you to grow at home: step by step

Getting Started:

1. [What's in the Garden Pack of seeds](#)

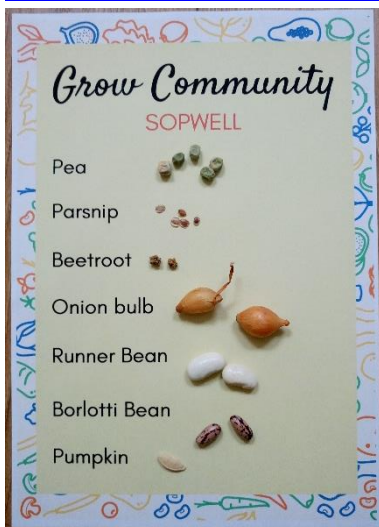


Photo credit: K Swindells

2. [What's in the Container Pack of seeds](#)



Photo credit: K Swindells

3. [How to make a newspaper pot](#)

Sowing Seeds (Garden Pack):

4. [Pea](#)

Pea		Vegetable
Suggested varieties: Sugar Pea (shelling), Ambassador, Covadonga, Wavona (shelling)		
PLANT	Regularly sow seed 3cm deep in pots and transplant, or sow in two lines in 10cm wide rows (seeds 5cm apart). Space rows of plants 60-90cm apart	Growing guide Easy
GROW	Protect seedlings from birds. Water established plants from when flowering starts. Mulch to conserve moisture. Support plants with wire mesh, netting or twiggly sticks	Average time to harvest 10-14 weeks
EAT	Cut 'mangetout' when pods are still flat; 'shelling' types when peas are felt through the pod (eg round pea, wrinkled, and petit pois). Pick regularly for more pods	Equipment needed Twiggy sticks, mulch (eg compost)
		Germination time 7-10 days
		Average plant size 90cm tall, 30cm wide
2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot www.gardenorganic.org.uk		Family group to grow with Legumes: beans, peas
		Seed saving group 1 - Annual, self-pollinating
		Key nutritional content Vitamin C, fibre, folate

Photo credit: Garden Organic

5. [Parsnip](#)

Parsnip		Vegetable
Suggested varieties: Gladiator F1, Tender & True, Targa		
PLANT	Sow seed 1cm deep, three seeds every 10-15cm. Thin to leave the strongest plant. Rows 15-30cm apart (more space for larger roots). Deep soil preferred	Growing guide Easy
GROW	Remove weeds by hand. Water fortnightly in dry weather for steady growth. If left dry for too long, sudden watering or rain can cause the roots to 'split' open	Average time to harvest From 20 weeks
EAT	Dig up as needed from autumn. Twist off the leaves rather than cutting. Can leave parsnips in the soil over winter until spring. Frost often improves the flavour	Equipment needed None
		Germination time 10-28 days (can be erratic)
		Average plant size 20cm tall, 10cm wide
2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot www.gardenorganic.org.uk		Family group to grow with Apiaceae: carrot, celery
		Seed saving group 4 - Biennial, needs isolation
		Key nutritional content Vitamin C, fibre, folate

Photo credit: Garden Organic

6. [Beetroot](#)

Beetroot		Vegetable
Suggested varieties: Boltardy, Moneta, Red Ace		
PLANT	Sow seed 0.5cm deep in rows 20-30cm apart. Thin seedlings to 7-13cm apart. Use bolt resistant cultivars for early sowings. Can be sown in pots and transplanted	Growing guide Easy
GROW	Water every two weeks in dry weather for steady growth. Too much water promotes excess foliage; too little produces woody roots and poor yield	Average time to harvest 8-12 weeks
EAT	Start lifting roots when still quite small, eating these thinnings and leaving other plants to grow on. Twist off the leaves rather than cutting	Equipment needed None
		Germination time 10-14 days
		Average plant size 30cm tall, 10cm wide
2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot www.gardenorganic.org.uk		Family group to grow with Chenopodiaceae: leaf beet
		Seed saving group 4 - Biennial, needs isolation
		Key nutritional content Folate, vitamin C

Photo credit: Garden Organic

7. Onion bulb (onion set)

Onion, Bulb

Suggested varieties: *Alba Craig Golden Bear F1, Red Baron (seed), Radar, Susan Globe (sets)*

PLANT Sow seed 1.5cm deep in rows 15-20cm apart. Thin seedlings to 5-10cm. Plant sets at the same spacing just beneath the soil surface with the tip showing

GROW Carefully remove weeds by hand. Water plants in dry weather, stopping once the bulbs have swollen. Break off any flower stems that appear

EAT Dig up bulbs two weeks after leaves turn yellow and topple over, choosing a dry day. Loosen with a hand fork. Leave bulbs to dry in the sun before storing

Growing guide
Easy

Average time to harvest
20 weeks

Equipment needed
None

Germination time
21 days

Average plant size
30cm tall, 10cm wide

Family group to grow with
Alliaceae: garlic, shallot

Seed saving group
2 - Annual, can cross-pollinate

Key nutritional content
Adds flavour and texture

Spring Term			Summer Term			Autumn/Winter Term					
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

■ Sow indoors
 ■ Sow outdoors
 ■ Plant out/transplant
 ■ Harvest
 ■ Use cloche

2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot

Photo credit: Garden Organic

8. Runner bean

Bean, Runner

Bulbs: *Enorma Elite, Painted Lady*

PLANT Sow seed 3cm deep in pots or rows. Thin or transplant to 15cm apart in double rows 30cm apart. Choose deep fertile soil and sheltered site

GROW Water plants when pods are swelling (if dry weather). Mulch to conserve moisture. Make study frameworks to support growth (eg wigwams from bamboo canes)

EAT Cut 15-20cm long pods every 2-3 days (longer pods are tough and stringy). Pick thoroughly as any ripe pods left on the plant will stop production

Growing guide
Easy

Average time to harvest
10-14 weeks

Equipment needed
Canes, mulch (eg compost)

Germination time
7-14 days

Average plant size
2.5m tall, 30cm wide

Family group to grow with
Legumes: french beans, peas

Seed saving group
2 - Annual, can cross-pollinate

Key nutritional content
Vitamin C, folate

Spring Term			Summer Term			Autumn/Winter Term					
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

■ Sow indoors
 ■ Sow outdoors
 ■ Plant out/transplant
 ■ Harvest
 ■ Use cloche

2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot

www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Photo credit: Garden Organic

9. [Borlotti bean](#)

10. [Pumpkin](#)

Pumpkin and Squashes

Suggested varieties: *Atlantic Giant, Uchiki Kuri*

PLANT Sow seed in pots, 1.5cm deep on their side. Harden off and transplant 60-90cm apart. Choose fertile soil in sunny sheltered site

GROW Mulch to conserve moisture. Pinch out growing tips of trailing stems when 60cm long. Protect from slugs. Place larger fruit on a tile to stop rotting

EAT Cut with 10cm stalk when fruit have coloured and sound hollow when tapped, but before frosts. Let skin harden in the sun for 10 days if storing. Flowers are edible

Growing guide
Easy

Average time to harvest
14-20 weeks

Equipment needed
Mulch (eg compost), tiles

Germination time
5-8 days

Average plant size
45cm tall, 120cm wide

Family group to grow with
Cucurbit: courgettes, marrow

Seed saving group
2 - Annual, can cross-pollinate

Key nutritional content
Vitamin A, vitamin C

Spring Term			Summer Term			Autumn/Winter Term					
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

■ Sow indoors
 ■ Sow outdoors
 ■ Plant out/transplant
 ■ Harvest
 ■ Use cloche

2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot

www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Photo credit: Garden Organic

Sowing Seeds (Container Pack):

11. [Lettuce](#)

[Planting the seeds](#)

[Potting on](#)

Lettuce Suggested varieties: Bibb, Bightini, Frisée (loose-leaf), Bedford, Trian, Spinnato (heating)

PLANT Regularly sow seed 0.5cm deep in pots or rows. Thin or transplant seedlings to 15-30cm apart. Use cloches and greenhouses to extend growing season

GROW Water in dry weather (stops tough and bitter leaves). Water in the morning to discourage disease. Protect from slugs. Ventilate greenhouses and cloches

EAT Pick individual leaves of 'loose-leaf' lettuce as needed. Cut 'heating' varieties when central leaves are fairly firm. Regularly cut seedling leaves

Growing guide
Germination: 7-14 days
Average time to harvest: 6-8wks (loose-leaf); 8-14 (heating)
Equipment needed: Slug protection
Germination time: 6-12 days
Average plant size: 20cm tall and wide
Family group to grow with: Asteraceae: chicory, salsify
Seed saving group: 1 - Annual, self-pollinating
Key nutritional content: Vitamin A, folate, vitamin C

Spring Term: J F M A M J J A
Summer Term: J J A S O N D
Autumn/Winter Term: J F M A M J J A

2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Photo credit: Garden Organic

12. Spinach Beet

[Planting the seeds](#)

[Potting on](#)

Leaf Beet Suggested varieties: Rainbow Chard, Swiss Chard, Perpetual Spinach

PLANT Regularly sow seed 1cm deep in pots or rows. Thin or transplant seedlings to 15-30cm apart. Choose fertile soil and sunny site

GROW Water in dry weather for steady growth. Mulch to conserve moisture. Boost growth with a general organic fertiliser if needed

EAT Cut off outer leaves when big enough to use. Can also use younger seedling leaves when 10cm high (cutting to 2.5cm; plants will regrow several times)

Growing guide
Germination: 7-14 days
Average time to harvest: 8-12 weeks
Equipment needed: Mulch (eg compost)
Germination time: 10-14 days
Average plant size: 60cm tall, 30cm wide
Family group to grow with: Chenopodiaceae: spinach

Spring Term: J F M A M J J A
Summer Term: J J A S O N D
Autumn/Winter Term: J F M A M J J A

2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Photo credit: Garden Organic

13. Spring onion

[Planting the seeds](#)

[Potting on](#)

Onion, Salad

Suggested varieties: *Crimson Forest, De Rebouillon, White Lisbon*

Vegetable

PLANT



Regularly sow seed 0.5cm deep in rows 10cm apart. Thin seedlings if needed to 2.5-5cm. Remove thinnings so not to attract 'onion root fly'

GROW



Weeds easily damage plants so carefully remove by hand. Water plants in dry weather for steady growth. Break off any flower stems that appear

EAT



Gently lift bulbs when 1-2cm across and the leaves are still green. Loosen with a hand fork if needed. Sowing regularly will give a succession of harvests

Spring Term			Summer Term				Autumn/Winter Term				
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

■ Sow indoors
 ■ Sow outdoors
 ■ Plant out/transplant
 ■ Harvest
 Use cloche

2.5cm = 1 inch 30 cm = 1 foot

Growing guide

Easy!

Average time to harvest
10-12 weeks

Equipment needed
None

Germination time
21 days

Average plant size
20cm tall, 5cm wide

Family group to grow with
Alliaceae: garlic, shallot

Seed saving group
2 - Annual, can cross-pollinate

Key nutritional content
Folate, vitamin C, iron, vit. A



Photo credit: Garden Organic