



**what to grow when - a
month by month guide.**

SproutClub 

What to grow when

Timing is everything and that is especially true when it comes to growing your own fruit and vegetables. Following a month by month guide of what to do, when to sow and when to harvest, can make all the difference.

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January

The more preparatory work you do now, the better your plants will fare. Sketch out your planting for the coming season and remember that crops need to rotate each year. Look at seed catalogues and order early.

Sow indoors

- winter salads

Sow outdoors

- shallot sets
- onion sets
- some garlic varieties
- force rhubarb

Harvest

- brussels sprouts
- celeriac
- jerusalem artichokes
- kale
- leeks
- parsnips
- sprouting broccoli
- swede
- turnips
- winter cabbage



TASKS

- improve your soil for this year's crops
- turn off outdoor taps and wrap in bubble wrap to prevent freezing
- mulch newly planted fruit trees
- warm soil in preparation for planting outdoors
- feed fruit plants with a general all purpose fertiliser
- watch out for moles as they become more active because of mating and nest-building activity
- plan carefully what you are going to plant and grow this year
- remove leaves from guttering
- check overwintering plants for damage and remove any diseased growth before it rots
- buy onion sets - growing onions from sets is a less fiddly way to raise onions than sowing seed

TASKS

- repair any broken fence panels or trellis.
- start planting greenhouse crops
- check stored vegetables
- harvest winter vegetables
- spread compost
- chit early potatoes
- clean pots and seed trays
- check on your seeds
- plant bare root roses
- winter prune apple and pear trees
- prepare veg beds for sowing by weeding and covering with thick layer of garden compost
- find hibernating slugs and snails under pots to reduce population
- clean and set up cloches to warm the soil for early sowings
- invest in a soil thermometer as it takes the guesswork out of early sowings

February

When seed packets arrive, make a chart of what to plant when. If the ground is workable outside, plant bare root perennial vegetables like asparagus, artichoke and rhubarb.

Sow indoors

- courgettes
- carrots
- broad beans
- salad
- potatoes
- peas

Sow outdoors

- broad beans
- early carrots
- peas
- radishes
- spinach
- spring onions
- Jerusalem artichokes
- rhubarb crowns

Harvest

- Brussels sprouts
- celeriac
- jerusalem artichokes
- kale
- leeks
- parsnips
- sprouting broccoli
- swede
- turnips
- winter cabbage



March

The days will start to lengthen and you can start to sow hardy annual crops outside. The weather tends to be unpredictable in this month so be aware of late season frost that might damage your crops.

Sow indoors

- aubergines
- cucumber
- melon
- peppers
- tomatoes
- celery and celeriac
- leeks
- onions
- brussels sprouts
- summer cabbage
- calabrese
- cauliflower
- broad beans

Sow outdoors

- early potatoes
- beetroot
- chard
- peas
- early carrots
- parsnip
- turnip
- kohlrabi
- spinach
- spring onion
- lettuce, herbs, salad leaf

Harvest

- forced rhubarb

TASKS

- give your lawn a spring boost
- fork out any weeds
- chop down winter grown green manure and dig into the soil to get the veg beds ready for sowing
- protect early crops from frost with cloches or fleece
- feed cabbages and other brassicas with nitrogen rich fertiliser
- start hoeing the veg beds as soon as the weather starts to warm up to discourage weeds
- plant strawberries in hanging baskets to keep the fruit away from slugs
- buy or build a compost bin to recycle garden waste
- use slug prevention barriers around new shoots
- check soil acidity - most vegetables prefer slightly acidic soil (6.0 to 6.8 pH).

TASKS

- place cardboard collars around stems of brassicas to deter cabbage root fly from laying their eggs
- pinch out the tips of broad beans if they have aphids
- plant flowering companions in the veg beds, such as marigolds, to discourage pests
- divide clumps of hardy herbs, such as chives, and replant in pots or borders
- protect emerging seedlings from slugs and snails
- prick out seedlings growing indoors into pots and trays as soon as their first true leaves appear
- install a water butt to make good use of April showers

April

This is beginning of the serious seed sowing season as the days are longer and the weather is a little more predictable. The weather can sometimes work against you so keep fleeces handy in case of a cold snap at night. Check soil temperature – when it registers consistently at 16C or above, it's safe to plant warm season crops. Begin also setting out your early-season indoor crops – but try and minimize the shock but transplanting on an overcast day and water well when planting.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes
- aubergines
- peppers
- cucumbers
- French and runner beans
- courgette and summer squash
- sweetcorn
- leeks
- calabrese and cauliflower

Sow outdoors

- raspberry canes
- maincrop carrots
- beetroot
- parsnip
- swede
- turnip
- peas
- spinach
- spring onion
- radish
- lettuce and salad leaves
- rocket

Harvest

- baby salad leaves
- spinach
- oriental greens



May

With the risk of frost gone, most seeds can be sown directly outdoors. As the days get warmer, make sure you water consistently as consistent moisture is of the utmost importance.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes
- aubergines
- peppers
- cucumbers
- French and runner beans
- courgette and summer squash
- sweetcorn
- leeks
- calabrese and cauliflower

Sow outdoors

- runner beans, climbing beans
- sweetcorn
- peas and dwarf beans
- maincrop carrots
- swede and winter turnip
- beetroot
- lettuce
- radish
- rocket
- spring onion
- spinach
- chard
- pak choi
- leeks
- squash
- courgettes
- tomatoes

Harvest

- asparagus
- radish
- baby salad leaves
- oriental greens
- first new potatoes

TASKS

- follow the seed packet instructions for proper spacing of the crops that are directly sown and thin seedlings accordingly.
- watch for insect damage on leaves and treat accordingly.
- earth up potatoes, covering shoots with soil as they appear.
- reduce snail population by going on regular evening hunts, especially during damp weather
- remove all strawberry runners so plants put their full energy into the fruit
- tie up stems of tomatoes, cucumber and courgettes and water regularly
- keep pricking out seedling as soon as they get their true leaves.



TASKS

- cover developing and ripening fruit with netting or fleece to protect crops from birds
- spread mulch around thirsty crops such as beans or courgettes to hold moisture around their roots
- check for woolly aphids on fruit trees
- water vegetables and fruit in containers regularly, especially during dry sunny weather
- tie in new shoots of blackberries, raspberries and other cane fruits.
- apply tomato feed regularly to fruiting veg crops, including tomatoes, courgettes, pumpkins and chillies

June

Over the summer months, the focus is on maintenance and harvest of your crops. As your plants grow, be ready with staking materials to keep your crops off the ground and supported. Harvest during times of the day with lower temperatures, early morning or early evening, when the plants are less stressed.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes

Sow outdoors

- celery and celeriac
- beetroot
- carrot
- radish
- spring onion
- lettuce
- pak choi and other oriental greens
- peas and beans
- calabrese
- leaf beet

Harvest

- soft fruits like raspberries and strawberries
- radish
- new potatoes
- peas and magetout
- broad beans
- spinach and leaf beet
- lettuce and salad leaves
- carrots
- courgettes



July

This is the month to make the most of your growing crops. There will be plenty to pick and enjoy. It's also the time to make a start on sowing winter vegetables.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes

Sow outdoors

- dwarf French beans
- late runner beans
- spring cabbage
- beetroot
- carrots
- lettuce
- salad leaves and oriental greens
- spring onion
- radish
- turnip
- spinach
- leeks
- winter brassicas

Harvest

- late peas and broad beans
- dwarf, climbing and runner beans
- baby beets, carrots, radish and spring onion
- garlic and shallots
- potatoes
- courgettes
- calabrese
- spinach and chard



TASKS

- water in the morning as it's the best time to reduce reevaporation and make sure to water the soil and not the leaves to reduce fungal disease.
- harvest daily, and if there is an excess of crops, share your bounty
- extend your season with late harvest of beans, carrots, cucumbers cauliflower and other cold-season crops
- prune trained pears and apple trees
- stake tall plants with canes
- rake up any fallen leaves

TASKS

- monitor moisture, insects and disease.
- be especially vigilant for signs of potato and tomato blight
- make a note of your successes and failures - this will help with your plantings next year
- plant well-rooted strawberry runners into new beds
- pinch out tops of outdoor tomatoes
- lift onions and shallots once their tops die down and leave to dry out in the sun
- cut back on grapevines to let the sun ripen the fruits
- water crops regularly if there is no hosepipe ban (use water butt where possible)
- summer pruning of apple trees

August

This is the end days of summer, time for you and your garden to enjoy a break. If you haven't planted your fall harvest yet, it's not too late to start now.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes

Sow outdoors

- dwarf French beans
- late runner beans
- spring cabbage
- beetroot
- carrots
- radish
- spinach

Harvest

- late peas and broad beans
- dwarf, cimbing and runner beans
- baby beets, carrots, radish and spring onion
- garlic and shallots
- potatoes
- courgettes
- calabrese
- spinach and chard
- soft berries



September

The weather is getting less predictable now and your priority is to protect tender plants like tomatoes from frost. As temperatures lower, it's a good time to dig your beds and fill with soil for spring.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes

Sow outdoors

- winter salads
- oriental greens
- spring cabbage
- autumn onion sets

Harvest

- apples
- pears
- autumn raspberries
- sweetcorn
- potatoes
- carrots
- beetroot
- tomatoes
- cucumber
- runner, dwarf, and climbing beans
- last courgettes
- onions and shallots



TASKS

- pot up a selection of your favourite herbs in planters to bring inside for the winter.
- mulch your beds thickly to protect winter crops.
- cut asparagus plants to the ground as soon as the foliage has turned yellow or brown.
- pick apples and pears before the wind blows them down and store undamaged fruits if you can't eat them fresh.
- store chillies by threading the stalks onto strong cotton or wire and hang up to dry somewhere warm and dry
- lift main crop potatoes, dry off and store in hessian or paper sacks in a cool dark place.
- clean out water butts of fallen leaves
- remove large fruits on fig trees that have failed to ripen

TASKS

- check stored vegetables
- harvest winter vegetables
- spread compost
- chit early potatoes
- clean pots and seed trays
- check on your seeds
- plant bare root roses
- winter prune apple and pear trees
- prepare veg beds for sowing by weeding and covering with thick layer of garden compost
- find hibernating slugs and snails under pots to reduce population
- clean and set up cloches to warm the soil for early sowings

October

This is the month to make the most of your growing crops. It's also the time to make a start on sowing winter vegetables.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- tomatoes

Sow outdoors

- winter salads and oriental greens
- autumn onion sets
- garlic in the south

Harvest

- apples
- pears
- autumn cabbage
- beetroot
- carrot
- parsnip
- turnip
- leeks
- chard
- leaf beet
- last runner beans
- pumpkins and winter squash
- first kale, brussels sprouts and sprouting broccoli



November

Weather permitting, you may still get some garden time. The more you do now, the easier it will become in the spring as well.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- winter salads

Sow outdoors

- over winter peas
- broad beans

Harvest

- carrots
- parsnips
- leeks
- beetroot
- brussels sprouts
- sprouting broccoli
- winter cabbage
- cauliflower
- winter salads

December

Weather permitting, you may still get some garden time. The more you do now, the easier it will become in the spring as well.

Sow indoors

- herbs
- winter salads

Sow outdoors

- over winter peas
- broad beans

Harvest

- carrots and parsnips
- leeks
- beetroot
- brussels sprouts and sprouting broccoli
- winter cabbage
- cauliflower
- winter salads

TASKS

- pot up a selection of your favourite herbs in planters to bring inside for the winter.
- mulch your beds thickly to protect winter crops.
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- pick apples and pears before the wind blows them down and store undamaged fruits if you can't eat them fresh.
- store chillies by threading the stalks onto strong cotton or wire and hang up to dry somewhere warm and dry
- lift main crop potatoes, dry off and store in hessian or paper sacks in a cool dark place.
- clean out water butts of fallen leaves
- remove large fruits on fig trees that have failed to ripen



links and resources

There is a wealth of information available online or in books and magazines. Here are a few sites that we recommend:-

Allotment Vegetable Growing: www.allotment.org.uk

BBC Gardening: www.bbc.co.uk/gardening

Garden Organic: charity and seed catalogue. www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Square Foot Gardening: www.squarefootgardening.com

The Royal Horticultural Society: www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own

Charles Dowding No Dig: <https://charlesdowding.co.uk/>

Sarah Raven: www.sarahraven.com



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opportunity to grow**

www.sproutclub.com
hello@sproutclub.com

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