



BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO GROWING FOOD

This simple guide will give you with the basics of what you need to know to get started growing your own vegetables. Gardening and growing food is a lifelong journey, so don't feel bad about making mistakes.

☐ GETTING STARTED

- Think about how much sun, shade, rain, and wind you get in your growing area.
- Start small and simple. Try 2-3 crops in your first year to begin learning with.
- What plants might grow best in your area? What time of the year should they go in the ground?

☐ SOIL, PLANTS, AND TOOLS

- Buy some high quality potting soil. The soil should be dark brown, closer to black in colour.
- Select healthy plants with a strong main stem and that aren't droopy or damaged.
- Buy or borrow a metal trowel, a good pair of pruners, some gloves, and a good gardening book.

☐ BASIC PLANT CARE

- Plants need different amounts of sunlight, heat, water, and nutrients, Make sure to understand what your plants need. Read their tags, seed packets, or look them up!
- Be sure your plants get enough water. This can be tricky at first but during the summer, most food bearing plants will need water every day or at least every other day.
- Adding mulch or potted leaves into your soil can help retain moisture and allow for drainage.

☐ DISEASE AND PEST MANAGEMENT

- Prevention is key. Having a diverse range of plants, healthy soil, and minimal contaminants will go a long way.
- Diseases can be hard to correctly diagnose. Check your plants often and don't treat something if you're not absolutely sure what you're treating. Try home remedies first.

☐ GARDEN DESIGN BASICS

- Do a sketch of your growing area and include all the existing features like slope, sunny spots, and large trees and shrubs.
- Try to think of your garden in "zones" grouped by their needs. For example, a shady zone might be the perfect place for some spinach and perennial greens like chicory or watercress.