



# “Get Ready to Garden”

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## CONSIDERATIONS :

- How much time do you have to spend in the garden?
- What do you want to grow? Choose plants you are really going to enjoy either in terms of eating or in terms of aesthetic appeal
- Finance? e.g Can you afford all the latest trellises for tomatoes or are you going to stake and Florida weave them with string?
- Sun/ shade/ aspect – where is your garden situated – is it in full sun, partial shade, is it north or south facing-

All will dictate what you can grow easily.

## PLANTING

1. **Seeds** – rule of thumb: no deeper than 3x the diameter of the seed. But note which plants needs to be planted covered by soil ( in the dark) vs those that need light for germination

Those that require light: some flowers, some vegetables: Ageratum, Balloon, Flower, Begonia, Browallia, Coleus, Columbine, Geranium, Impatiens, Lettuce Lobelia, Nicotiana, Osteospermum, Petunias, Poppies, Snapdragons

Those that can grow in either light or dark (light indifferent) :

Alyssum, Aster, Balsam, Cole crops – eg collards, cauliflower, cabbage, rutabaga, collards, broccoli Celosia, Cosmos, Cucumbers and Squash, Dianthus, Eggplant, Marigold, Melons, Peppers, Tomato, Zinnia

2. **Transplants** – home grown or bought. Tip- DO NOT buy the leggy ones . You need sturdy dark green or dark leaved healthy plants to grow well.

To transplant – first harden off – get them used to their new environment by leaving the seedlings (if in pots) out in the daylight hours and bringing them in at night

- Prepare containers or soil : Choose cloudy / drizzly day / late afternoon
- Take out – tools and get everything ready including sugar water (2 Tbs sugar to one litre of slightly warmed water) , and rolled oats to put in the bottom of the transplant hole or pot
- Speed – don't let the roots dry out
- Don't touch – the stem or the leaves if you can help it.
- Long roots – lie new pot on its side , or make sufficient space in the ground to accommodate the roots .
- Hole – slightly bigger –mix compost in bottom + oats ( growth ...) When seedling is in hole – firm it down. Water in immediately with warm sugar water solution
- Set seedlings slightly deeper – make a dish around them so that water can be guided to the roots .

- Watch – no direct sun for the first few days –cover with wet newspaper or wet cloths
- Ensure that seedlings are well watered

3. **Tomatoes** – lie tomato plants on their sides when re-planting so that part of the stem is actually covered by soil . The stem will grow “adventitious roots” along the buried length which will anchor the plant more firmly, as well as giving the plan a greater root area with which to gather nutrients from the soil.

4. **Florida weave** for tomatoes and other climbing plants - cheaper than fencing .

<http://www.foogod.com/~torquill/barefoot/weave.html>-

5. **Spacing** - How much can I fit in ? see <http://www.mysquarefootgarden.net/plant-spacing/>- this gives all vegetable spacing and diagrams on spacing .

Rule of thumb:

16 Radishes	4 annual flowers eg	*1 Broccoli
16 Carrots	Cosmos or borage	*1 Brussels sprout
16 onions	Alyssum	2 cucumbers ( vertical)
9 bush beans	*1 Tomato (bush or	*1 melon
*9 garlic –plant in fall	vining)	*1 vining squash
9 beets	*1 Bell Pepper	*4 pole beans
8 peas	*1 Eggplant	*1 potato
4 chard / spinach	*1 Cabbage	*1 corn
4 lettuce	1 Cauliflower	* needs full sun for 6-8
4 parsley	1 Kale	hours

6. **Seasonal planting** – cold, hot , cool season plants and top 10 easily grown veg :

Cool season VEG-( SPRING  
OR FALL)

Peas  
Beets  
Cabbage family  
Asparagus  
Rhubarb  
Lettuce  
Radish  
Onion  
Chard

Top 10

- Beans
- Lettuce
- Radish
- Tomatoes
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Spinach /chard
- Beets
- Peppers
- Onions

• Hot seaoon Veg –  
SUMMER

Tomatoes  
Peppers  
Egg plant  
Summer squash  
Corn  
Cucumber  
Beans  
Carrots  
Melon  
Start Winter squash

7. **Fertilizers:** NPK and minerals and trace elements- stay natural as far as possible.  
pH=potential hydrogen . Measured form 1-14 . & is neutral 1-6.9 is acidic (most local soils) , 7.1-14 is alkaline. Most vegetables grow best in 6.0-7.0 .  
**N – Nitrogen** – from bone and blood meal , manures and green materials., or alfalfa compost teas . Used for overall growth and leaves. Gas in the soil , disperses very fast. Difficult to test for.  
**P – Phosphorous** from blood and bone meal and fish and kelp based fertilizers . Good for stem and root development . Many compost teas contain P as well.  
**K- Kalium/ potassium** – wood ash, some manures good for overall fruit and flower development  
**Calcium** – naturally in the soil generally – often put together with lime for feeding grasses etc  
Calcium can only become available to plants if magnesium is available – Epsom salts = magnesium , spread 1Tbs to 1 sq foot.  
Inorganic fertilizers are petroleum based by- products and kill many beneficial animals , plants in the soil.

## 8. Bug and other sprays

### **Leek spray for fungal growths on plants**

Blend 2-3 leeks with 4 pints water in a blender  
Leave for 2-3 days to steep  
Strain juice through filter paper  
Contains sulfur, general fungicide

### **Powdery mildew spray**

2 tsp horticultural oil  
( or vegetable oil)  
In 4 cups water  
1tsp baking soda  
Spray after rain or every 7-10 days  
For mildew, black spot, rust

### **Slug bait**

2 tsp dried yeast  
2 Tbs sugar  
1 l warm water  
Mix ingredients together and wait till it froths a bit  
Pour into cans , yoghurt pots etc, half sunk in ground near where slugs are worst.  
Slugs will climb in and drown.  
Dispose of and replace every day until infestation is controlled.  
Repeat as necessary

**General purpose pesticide**: This can kill good bugs as well as bad ones, and do not use on seedlings

- 1 bulb garlic,1 small onion
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Put garlic and onion in a blender/ mixer and pulverise. Mix in cayenne pepper and steep in 1 litre water for 1 hour . Drain and sieve . Add 1 Tablespoon dish soap + spray on all pesky insects. Beware – this may kill some friends too. Keep refrigerated .

## **9. Watering :**

Never use :

- cold water – use +/- 21 C
- Chlorinated water – leave overnight
- Water softener water- too salty
- BUT Water from bottom (if possible) ,Use water to spread diluted fish or kelp or alfalfa compost teas –normally 1:20