

Create space
for entertaining,
family or relaxation



Ideas for Outdoor Designs

GROW YOUR OWN



A beginners
guide to
growing
food in a
garden

YOUR SPACE

VEGETABLES

HERBS

FRUIT

SEASONS

MORE



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Food

1 – Wildlife
2 – Weeds
4 – Pests

What space do you have?

If you have a small garden or area you would like to devote to edible planting there are a few considerations you need to note before you begin to create your food patch.

What level of sunlight does the area get? If the space is shady most of the time you may need to find another area as most food crops require a reasonable level of sunlight throughout the year.

Would you like to grow herbs or grow staple vegetables? You will also need space to store vegetables over winter. How much time do you have for looking after your crops?

Does the soil have good drainage? If your soil gets waterlogged try adding low-fertility organic materials or grow in raised beds.



The best way to start growing is to just pick out a few of the things you like to eat and look up their growing seasons (see example chart on page 4)

Although your choices are personal, this guide offers you a few hints to help you select foods which work well together and spread the maintenance across the food year.

This allows time for you to create compost, collect autumn leaves to make leaf mould, and improve the soil for the next season of crops.

As a quick guide if you have little time to devote and need an easy start I would pick four vegetables – potato, carrot, lettuce and peas, four or so herbs – coriander, chive, mint and parsley and possibly a fruit such as rhubarb or strawberries.



Potato's

Require a good size area but can give a good yield. They can be grown from small tubers or you could just try planting in the soil one of your shop bought potatoes which has started to sprout.

I recommend growing them in a pot so when they are ready to harvest you can just tip them out rather than have to go digging. Make sure you keep adding soil to the top while the green leaf grows as exposed new potatoes turn green.

Carrots

These are a little more challenging to grow but can be harvested all year round if you use a selection of different cultivars.

They are best closely spaced to each other in a small area. If you sow a new batch every two weeks you should have carrots for the full harvest season.



Lettuce

These can be grown in and around other vegetables such as under the tripods of peas and runner beans or amongst cabbage or radishes.

You can also keep sowing a new batch every 2 weeks for a long supply of lettuce but make sure you sow a lot more than you need as the slugs really like them. They grow well in containers if the slugs are a really problem.

Peas

The climbing edible pods type peas are good to add height and interest to your vegetable patch. They also produce attractive flowers and the more you pick the pods when ready the more pea pods the plant produces.

Fresh peas freeze well so can keep you going for a while.



Growing Herbs

Herbs often have strong smells and can have healing properties. They create diversity in your garden helping to sustain a successful ecosystem. Chives (perennial) and mint (perennial) attract bees while coriander (annual) attracts beneficial insects.

The flowers on woody, shrubby herbs such as lavender (evergreen) or sage (evergreen) will need pruning back in spring but most herbs are relatively easy to grow.

Pinch out growing tips to encourage bushy growth and pinch off flowers for a maximum yield. However leave some plants with the flowers to attract the wildlife.

Invasive herbs such as mint are best grown in a pot either buried in the ground or above ground. Other herbs are short lived such as parsley (biannual). These will need replacing for a fresh crop.

Growing Fruit

Most fruits have attractive blossoms to both humans and wildlife so make sure you plant enough surplus to go round for yourself and the animals.

You might want to grow soft fruits under a net to reduce the losses and increase the amount you have for that summer fruit salad.

Strawberries can be grown in the ground or in large pots. The average life span is three years for a good crop yield off the plant and fruit must be harvested straight away as soon as they have fully coloured.

Rhubarb is a good beginner fruit or as some say vegetable because you eat the stalks of the plant. It's a perennial so needs little maintenance and can last in the same position for up to 10 years.

It's frost resistant too making it a good all rounder but the leaves however are poisonous to humans so must not be eaten.

Mulch the plant over winter or early spring and you will get a much sweeter tasting crop that season.

KEY

S = Sow Outdoors | G = Plant Indoors (Greenhouse) | P = Plant Outdoors | Pf = forced | PC = Perennial Crop

Growing Season | **Harvest Season (plants keep growing over the harvest season until picked)**

Crop	PC	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Artichoke, globe	✓				P								
Asparagus – 1 year old crowns	✓												
Broad Bean – spring			S	S	S								
Beans – Runner						S	S	S					
Broccoli – nine -star	✓												
Cabbage – winter						S							
Carrot – main crop					S	S	S	S					
Celery – self blanching				G	G	P	P						
Courgette, marrow							S						
Garlic			P								P	P	
Leeks				S	S	S							
Lettuce – summer / autumn					S	S	S	S	S	S			
Onion – bulb, spring			S	S	S								
Parsnip			S	S	S	S							
Pea – main crop					S	S	S	S					
Pepper – sweet chilli						P							
Potato – main crop				P	P	P							
Radish - summer			S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			
Rhubarb – from crowns	✓		Pf	Pf							P	P	
Spinach - winter									S	S			
Sweetcorn						P	P						
Tomato - outdoor						P							

'Grow Your Own' has been created as a starting point of information and ideas to help you make the most of your outdoor space.

Gardens123 would like to thank you for your interest in our free guide and would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few more of our products and services.

Free Guides

Please browse all our booklets in this series for more garden design inspiration. We hope you will find these booklets useful as we are looking to increase this inspiration range further so keep checking for the latest booklets.

Concept Consultations – (£45 consultation fee)

If you need design guidance, a little inspiration or a friendly chat about how to use your outdoor space to its advantage, book a visit with our Landscape designer.

By mixing your ideas and enthusiasm with the designer's passion and skills, a concept vision for your garden can be created in an hour's consultation.

Concept Designs – (start at £160) as of Dec09 subject to change see website

These designs are created specifically if you have strong ideas for your space and know the materials you would like to use or you have existing features needing simple makeover revamp.

Layout Designs – (start at £320) as of Dec09 subject to change see website

This design process has been created if you have a small garden and just need a contractor to 'do the tricky bits' e.g. paving.

Further Services

Gardens123 offer a range of different garden design and construction services to suit your needs. We also offer gift vouchers for that unusual gift idea.

Visit **www.gardens123.co.uk** for more information.

Gardens123 hope you have found this guide interesting. We wish you all the best with your crops and look forward to hear from you again soon.