

Worksheet 2: Vegetable Growing for Beginners

Here are a few tips for getting started:

- Start small, whether it's a container or a raised bed; give your garden time to grow.
- Only plant what you want to eat or plants that are easily maintained.
- Make sure you have a water source as near as possible to your vegetable plants as carrying water can become cumbersome.
- Start a compost heap and make sure your compost bin or heap is easily accessible to both your garden and kitchen.

How to start Growing Your Own Vegetables:

Small beginnings are best when starting your own vegetable garden. You will be surprised what you can produce in a relatively small space while dealing with a large vegetable garden can become overwhelming if you have limited time to look after it. We also recommend starting with simple crops that don't suffer from many pests and diseases like salad crops, spring onions and beetroot so you can get a win under your belt first time around.

Most crops are happy growing in containers just like houseplants and if the correct compost and feed are used will yield just as well as plants grown in a large traditional vegetable garden. Herbs and salad can be grown in standard house plant pots while larger planters can be used to grow potatoes, carrots, pumpkins or courgettes.

The Secret is in the Soil:

The secret to vegetable growing is in the soil; a healthy, well fed soil produces strong plants which are able to withstand attack from pests or disease and produce the tastiest harvests. Vegetables grown in containers are better grown in a compost mix as soil will dry out too quickly but remember ordinary multi-purpose will only feed you plants for 3-4 weeks. We recommend home-made compost mixed with soil, but you can buy readymade composts and fertilisers at any garden centre.

If you have a plot that has not been used for 2 or 3 years, and the soil is very hard, you may need to cover your soil with manure, then black plastic and left for 3-4 months.

If your soil can be dug over, then do this using a garden fork, then a hoe until the soil has been turned over, add compost and water well before planting anything.