



SOW 'N' GROW

Whether you're an experience gardener or sowing for the first time – A quick read through the below and you'll be growing in no time! Each seed pack delivered includes a separate growing guide for the specific variety.

Here's a quick guide on how to sow seeds and other tips to know...

Sowing small seeds in seed trays (peppers, celery, lettuce)

- 1) Fill a seed tray / half seed tray with seed compost – which is light and contains a small but balance level of nutrients in the soil. Overfill and strike excess soil off with a board so that the seed tray is filled to the top with un-compressed soil.
- 2) Press the soil down evenly with a seed board so there is a 1cm lip at the top.
- 3) Submerge the seed tray into a water bath beneath so that the soil slowly absorbs the moisture from the bottom without disturbing the soil on top.
- 4) Sprinkle seed evenly on the soil level using the furrows in your palm and tapping the seed off with the other hand.
- 5) Cover the seeds with a small layer of vermiculite or perlite if you prefer.
- 6) Water above with a fine hose and add fungicide to the first watering to guard against damping off where possible.
- 7) Use the provided label to date the seeds and place in a cool light place.

Sowing larger seeds in pots (like courgette / runner beans/ pumpkin)

- 1) Fill a 6-9cm pot with seed compost – which is light and contains a small but balance level of nutrients in the soil. Overfill and strike excess soil off with a board so that the seed tray is filled to the top with un-compressed soil.
- 2) Submerge the seed tray into a water bath beneath so that the soil slowly absorbs the moisture from the bottom without disturbing the soil on top.
- 3) Press the seeds into the soil to a depth of about 2cm using a dibber or pencil.
- 4) Water above with a fine hose and add fungicide to the first watering to guard against damping off.
- 5) Cover the seeds with more of the seed-compost.
- 6) Label and date the seeds and place in a cool light place

Keeping and storing seeds

Sowing as soon as possible is recommended. However should you need to keep seeds in store for a while, here are some pointers.

If you are storing seed for future use, increase germination chances by storing them in as air-tight a container as you can.

Short term storage- Place your seed in a jar or plastic container. Seal the jar or container with a screw-on lid. Position in the refrigerator set to between 5 – 10°C.

Prevent fungal diseases

Seedlings are very prone to a disease called damping off. This is a fungal disease that occurs when your seeds have been sown too densely, and light and ambient temperature fluctuates too much.

To control the light levels and ambient temperature you could invest in a seed propagator if your serious about growing each season which regulates humidity levels and distributes light evenly to the seedlings beneath. The micro-climate has a controlled temperature too that prevents damping off.

Knowing the lingo

When your seeds germinate you should notice that the first pair of leaves look different to the leaves that come after. This is because the first pair of leaves are the seed leaves, that provided the seed with food but have the ability to photosynthesise too. So when a guide refers to the first 'true leaves' it means the leaves that appear after the seed leaves have unfurled. Bear this in mind for when you are advised to move on seedlings.

Handling with care

Seedlings are very fragile and plants can damage so easily further on in their development if they are checked at seedling stage. When watering make sure they are watered underneath using a seed bath under the tray or with a very fine hose. This will get water to the seedlings without deluging them.

When transferring seedlings from a seed tray to a pot or into the ground, unearth them with a dibber or pencil to loosen the roots and hold onto a seed leaf when transferring and definitely not the stem. Squashing the stem even slightly will check its growth later in its development.

Get in touch if you have any questions or ideas about growing in Winchburgh.

Happy growing!