



Year round planning

We've developed this factsheet to help you get the most out of your growing site all year round. You can use it to:

- Help you plan together with your group
- Anticipate and plan for seasonal gaps
- Involve 'non gardeners'
- Review the year and make changes

On the following two pages, we've created a detailed **Garden Planner** with suggestions and links to useful online resources under each of these headings, month by month, for you to refer to throughout the year.

This resource has a food focus but you can use the **Garden Planner** whatever you decide to grow.

On the final page, we discuss some general considerations under each of these five headings:

- Sow/grow
- Cook/eat
- Share
- Try
- Learn

The template below would be a good starting point to record your ideas as you work through the ideas and resources on offer in this factsheet.

Aim:	Consider your organisations objectives or whether you have a particular aim for this growing season			
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn
Sow/grow				
Cook/eat				
Share				
Try				
Learn				

GARDEN PLANNER						
	January	February	March	April	May	June
<p>Sow/grow</p> <p>Think quick, easy to grow, multi-croppers, interesting, expensive to buy, crops you can eat raw, flowers and herbs too.</p>	<p>Get ready to sow: Order and sort seeds, clean pots and trays, create labels. Plan and map your rotation.</p>	<p>Sow indoors: peppers, tomatoes chillies, sweet peas. Read growing guides here. Chit potatoes.</p>	<p>Keep sowing indoors. Start outdoor sowing with protection: leeks, radish, lettuce, broad beans.</p>	<p>Keep sowing outdoors and in. Try Edible flowers and unusual seeds. Protect with cloche or fleece.</p>	<p>Buy tomato and cucumber plants. Sow hardy annuals for cut flowers.</p>	<p>Start sowing directly outdoors. Keep sowing small amounts, often. Read more here.</p>
<p>Cook/eat</p> <p>Cook as you sow to link activity to crop you are sowing. Try eating raw too. Stuck for ideas? See Eat Seasonably.</p>	<p>Root veg soup</p>	<p>Woodlands Community Garden's Italian winter salad</p>	<p>Cook what you sow - pea and mint soup!</p>	<p>Spring green soup - Nettles perhaps!</p>	<p>Risotto with fresh garden herbs</p>	<p>Fresh herb pesto Green soup</p>
<p>Share</p> <p>Activities to bring people together, local or national events you can be part of.</p>	<p>Join the RSPB Great British Bird Watch</p>	<p>Try a group trip to a local tattie day. Check for dates near you: Scotland South England UK-wide</p>	<p>Enter 'It's Your Neighbour' and gain recognition for the work you do.</p>	<p>Organise a seed circle or seedling swap</p>	<p>Open your gates with 'National Gardening Week'</p>	<p>Big Lunch - A nationwide event supporting communities to come together</p>
<p>Try</p> <p>Activities and crafts for additional interest and the 'non gardeners'</p>	<p>Hold a tool maintenance workshop</p>	<p>Create a garden 'mood board' of planting and design ideas. Which areas need a rethink or some colour?</p>	<p>Making or refreshing recycled garden labels - lovely ideas here.</p>	<p>Growing cut flowers for sale</p>	<p>Divide potted herbs and send pots home with volunteers</p>	<p>Cooking on site - read our factsheet here</p>
<p>Learn</p> <p>Introduce simple garden concepts and practical techniques as you grow</p>	<p>Seed sowing jargon</p>	<p>Seed sowing Indoors Outdoors</p>	<p>Bed preparation How to manage annual and perennial weeds</p>	<p>Successional seed sowing Transplanting seedlings Thinning Hardening off</p>	<p>Planting out, potting on, pinching out! How much to water</p>	<p>About making and applying liquid feeds to greenhouse crops</p>

GARDEN PLANNER						
	July	August	September	October	November	December
<p>Sow/grow</p> <p>Think quick, easy to grow, multi-croppers, interesting, expensive to buy, crops you can eat raw, flowers and herbs too.</p>	Sow biennials for next year's spring flowers and carrots for winter crops.	Sow winter salads and greens outdoors. Grow more strawberries from runners. Sow potatoes. for Christmas	Sow winter salads and greens for indoors. Sow green manures.	Plant autumn bulbs and biennials. Sow over-wintering crops, e.g. broad beans, Japanese onions.	Sprouting seeds, lentils, chickpeas, sunflower seeds. Plant garlic. Order and plant bare root fruit.	Plan next year's sowing. Cross reference wish list with seed sowing times and you will have a simple seed calendar to work from.
<p>Cook/eat</p> <p>Cook as you sow to link activity to crop you are sowing. Try eating raw too. Stuck for ideas? See eat seasonably</p>	Simple garden salad with edible flowers	Raspberry juice Beetroot and chocolate cake	Making jam or chutney and lots more	Leek and tattie soup	Pumpkin leftovers!	Lentil, parsnip and apple soup
<p>Share</p> <p>Activities to bring people together, local or national events you can be part of.</p>	Welcome kids and carers with activities or garden toys. Join in with The Big Butterfly Count.	Open your gates for strawberry teas! And recruit more volunteers	Reward volunteers with a trip to other gardens.	Our factsheet can help you plan for Wild About Gardens Week. Run bug hunts, bird spot or mini audit.	Bulb planting- plant up the garden or where possible the street!	Host a year review and planning session.
<p>Try</p> <p>Activities and crafts for additional interest and the 'non gardeners'</p>	Herbal teas and lotions	Cutting and dry lavender scented drawer bags	Bird boxes or bug hotels	Pumpkin activities	Plant Indoor bulbs for scent	Christmas wreaths and table decorations
<p>Learn</p> <p>Introduce simple garden concepts and practical techniques as you grow</p>	About managing pests and disease. Try the friend or foe game.	Harvesting and storing	Building soil fertility with green manures	Seed saving Bare root planting	Composting	Learn about Gardening for Wildlife. What could you do differently next year?

Sow/Grow

When planning remind yourself of the garden's purpose, it will help you focus on what to grow. Considering a few simple questions will help get you started:

- What's quick, what's easy, what is expensive to buy? What do you like to eat?
- What suits your group's needs, your garden size and any cooking activity that takes place on site?
- Which crops give you the most value for money and space? Consider making space for plants that provide multiple crops - peas, tomatoes, beans, courgettes, fresh herbs
- Are there flowers that you'd like to grow for wildlife, food, sale or medicinal purpose?
- What do kids like?
- Can you tell an interesting story through your planting? Themed beds e.g. a soup or pizza bed, unusual veg or a raw veg bed?

Cook/eat

Sharing food in the garden is an excellent way to recruit and keep your volunteers.

Eat fruit and veg straight from the garden e.g. strawberries, blueberries, radishes, carrots, sugar snap peas.

Try sandwich fillers - leaves, radish, and tomatoes.

Make fresh herbal teas with a kellie kettle.

Plant fruit to eat raw, with cream or to make hot fruit punch or fruit smoothies.

Cook and eat what you are sowing E.g. when sowing peas make frozen pea and mint soup. You don't need a kitchen to enjoy eating outdoors. For more information and inspiration see our factsheets 'Cooking & Feasting on the plot' and 'Cooking & Feasting on the plot (Scotland)'.

Share

Hosting regular social events is a great way to reward and recruit more volunteers, raise your profile and raise some funds.

Many well-established garden projects run 'sharing events' on a regular basis as a social activity for their volunteers and staff. When you extend that to the wider public you can raise your profile, fundraise and attract new volunteers.

Simple ideas work best, e.g. run a sunflower competition, hold a pumpkin festival or take part in a national event such as The RSPB Great Garden Bird Watch.

Where volunteers attend on different days this is also a really good opportunity for them to come together.

Try

Try new activities with a craft or garden focus. For example, you could run workshops on feeding birds with winter fat balls, building an insect hotel or willow wigwams, making cordials or nettle shampoo, or creating garden mosaics.

These simple ideas will help keep interest and can involve less physically able volunteers.

Learn

Running a year-round informal training programme is an excellent way to share and develop practical skills and knowledge and, where appropriate, it can incentivise volunteers to come in regularly and at a set time.

Resources

There are lots of online resources available online to support you with ideas and 'ingredients' for activities. We include a few favourites below. If you have good resources that you'd like to share we'd love to hear from you.

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/resources>

www.seedssoupsarnies.org

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/schools

www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources