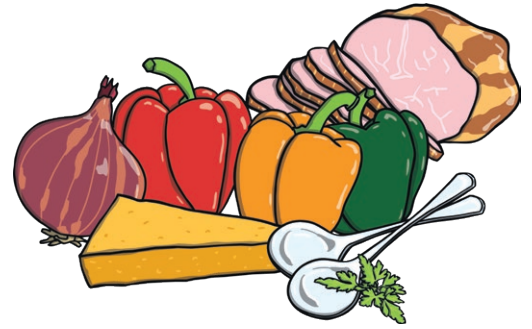


Start a Vegetable Patch

Growing your own vegetables is a fun way to enjoy lots of yummy healthy food. Here is a guide on how to start your own vegetable patch.



You Will Need

- a patch of soil in a sunny area. If you don't have a garden, some vegetables can be grown in tubs;
- gardening tools such as a spade, fork and trowel;
- compost (optional, but will make your vegetables grow better);
- seeds (carrots, lettuce and tomatoes are all easy to grow, if you are new to gardening);
- watering can.

These things can be bought in any garden centre.

1. Choose your patch of soil in a sunny area. Try to make it slightly away from plants already growing to help protect your vegetables from slugs and snails. If you don't have a garden, vegetables like lettuce, tomatoes and carrots can all be grown in deep tubs. They can be started off indoors although will eventually need to be moved outside somewhere sunny, like a window box.
2. Using a spade and a fork, dig up the soil to make it easier to plant seeds in. Remove any stones or bits of weeds in the soil.
3. If you are using compost, add it to the soil and then use a fork or spade to mix it in with the soil.
4. If your soil feels a bit dry, add water using a watering can.
5. Use your trowel to dig holes for the seeds to go in. Different plants need different amounts of space. The seed packet will tell you how far apart your seeds need to be put. A grown up might need to help you work this out.

6. Cover the seeds with soil and then water them. Your vegetable patch will need regular watering. The soil should feel damp but not wet.
7. As your plants start to grow, check your patch for weeds and pull any out.
8. Slugs and snails like to munch on vegetables! There are lots of ways to stop this, including putting copper rings or copper tape around your vegetables.
9. Your seed packet will give you an idea of how long it will be before your vegetables are ready.

