



Making The Most Of Every Season

The Autumn Collections 2024: Pocket Companion & Growing Guide



Ready, Steady, Grow

Gardening in the autumn presents a different yet equally fulfilling experience compared to the vibrant activity of summer. As temperatures cool and daylight hours shorten, the focus shifts from rapid growth to preparation for the colder months ahead. Autumn is the perfect time for planting hardy vegetables, bulbs, and perennials, which will establish roots before winter arrives. It's also a season of harvesting the last of summer's bounty while preparing the garden for next year. Mulching and composting are essential tasks during this time, helping to enrich the soil and protect plants from frost.

Autumn gardening is about nurturing the earth and setting the stage for future growth. Clearing away dead foliage, pruning perennials, and planting winter crops such as kale and garlic are common activities. It's also a good opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past season, making notes for next year's garden plans. The quieter pace of autumn allows gardeners to enjoy the beauty of seasonal change, as leaves turn golden and mornings become crisp. With careful planning and attention, autumn gardening ensures that the garden remains healthy and productive, ready to flourish once spring returns.

Within this digital edition of the Autumn Collection's Pocket Companion you'll find information covering all the different seeds sent out across the 9 collections we created for this season. The Pocket Companion sets out tried and trusted methods to succeed with your seed growing and all the details you need to take you through from opening the seed packet through to harvest, including:

- a handy at a glance calendar, details of each plants size, hardiness, preferred growing area as well as timescales for germination and harvest detailed sowing and growing instructions.

Happy growing, from

Nic

Sowing & Growing Terminology

Our pocket companions will no doubt reside in the pockets of experienced growers as well as those new to gardening. We all began our knowledge somewhere, so just in case it's helpful to you, here's a glossary of a few terms you'll become familiar with as you grow from seed.

'frost risk has passed': usually late May to early June, when night-time temperatures no longer fall below 0 degrees Celsius and frost is no longer likely.

'germinate/germination': the process of a seed starting to grow, developing a small root and seed leaves.

'prick out': careful movement of a very young seedling, by the seed leave, not stem, from the pot it germinated in to a larger pot or module of its own, to grow on.

'harden off': young plants sown indoors are tender and need to acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out. Place in a sheltered sunny spot outside, or in a cold frame, during the day and bring inside at night. Over a period of 7-10 days increase the time the plants spend outside.

'row': seeds are sown in drills to form a row or a line of vegetables or flowers; seeds are sown in a row to help distinguish the sown seedlings from weeds. Also it allows you to give the correct amount of space for the crops to grow well. It is important to know the distance between rows.

'seed drill': a channel or groove made into the soil, to sow the seeds along. The depth of the drill is determined by the size of the seed. Typically seeds should be sown at a depth three times their width.

'seedling': a tiny plant, usually only with its first leaves growing.

'spacing': the distance between seeds along the drill and also distance between adjacent rows. This is determined by the size of the seed and size of the plant it will grow into. Large plants will need wider spacing between seeds along the drill and between adjacent rows than small plants.

'sow direct': to sow seeds into the soil, usually outside in beds or large containers.

'sow thinly': sprinkle seeds sparingly, so that there is visible space between each seed. If you sow seeds too closely together they will be crowded and will not thrive.

'sow under glass or in a propagator': some seeds must be sown indoors in pots and given some heat to germinate. A sunny windowsill, as well as a greenhouse is a good location for starting off seeds.

'full sun': A position in the garden that receives sun for most of the day.

'thin out seedlings': careful removal of seedlings that are growing too close together. Water the row of seedlings well and then pull out the excess seedlings, leaving a row of single healthy seedlings at the correct spacing from one another.

'transplant': the planting of a small plant, either into a larger pot or from a pot into the final position in the garden, where it will grow on to flower or harvest.

'semi shade / partial sun': The seeds should be sown in a mostly shady place, but with some sun

'successive crops': Crops sown at regular intervals so they mature one after the other.

Ammi Majus

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Ammi majus is reminiscent of Cow Parsley which softens the verges of country lanes. This tall annual produces a froth of delicate white blooms that bring a simple, elegant feel to summer borders. Commonly known as Bishops Weed, its graceful stems rise above ferny foliage, lending themselves nicely to summer bouquets.

This airy annual associates beautifully with tall grasses and summer perennials, mingling happily to soften planting schemes and create a hazy, romantic appearance. Its blooms are loved by pollinating insects, and the autumn seed heads attract Finches to the garden.





Direct sow ammi majus seeds outdoors where they are to grow from April to June in full sun or semi shade, on fertile, well drained soil which has been raked to a fine tilth. Sow seeds thinly, at a depth of 1.5mm in drills spaced 30cm apart. Water the ground regularly, especially during dry periods. When ammi seedlings are large enough to handle, thin them out to 25cm apart.

Water regularly until plants become fully established. Ammi stems will require staking. Place twiggy sticks among the seedlings while they are 10cm high and allow ammi plants to grow through them for support.



Height: to 140cm
Spread: to 50cm
Hardy annual
Full sun
Germination:
7 - 21 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

Antirrhinum

J F M A M J J A S O N D



You can sow antirrhinum (Snapdragon) seed under cover either in spring or autumn, from February to April or in September and October. Or direct sow the seeds outside from April to July. Sprinkle snapdragon seeds on the surface of good quality seed compost the soil. The seeds are tiny, so don't cover them as they need light to germinate. It is recommended you moisten the compost or soil before sowing the seeds and once sown keep the compost moist but not wet using a mister to avoid washing the seeds through the compost. Once sown, place indoor seeds under a propagator cover or in clear plastic bag until they have germinated. Prick out seedlings when they are large enough to handle into modules or 9cm pots and grow them on until they are sturdy plants. They can be planted out into well prepared beds once the danger of frost has passed. Plant out Autumn sown seedlings in a very spot in warmer areas or put in a cold frame to overwinter and give you flowers as early as the following May.

If growing Snapdragons in pots, use as large a container as possible, place the container in a sunny sheltered position where they will not be damaged by the wind. As many varieties of Snapdragon are particularly tall plants, they will need staking.

To encourage the plant to bush out some gardeners will pinch it as a seedling, however cutting them for flower arrangements will have the same effect. Keep picking flower stems (not to the ground but to above a pair of leaves), and they will keep flowering for months at a time.



Height: to 120cm

Spread: to 60cm

Half-hardy annual

Full Sun

Germination:

10 - 21 days

Vase life: 7 - 10 days



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Flower

Broad Bean

J F M A M J J A S O N D

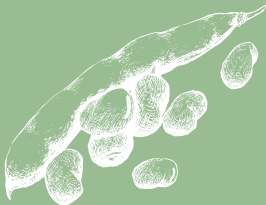
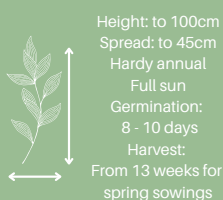


Sown Broad Beans in late winter (indoors or outdoors with the protection of a cloche or similar) or spring (outdoors), although in mild regions they can also be sown in late autumn. Plants grown indoors should be hardened off before planting out.

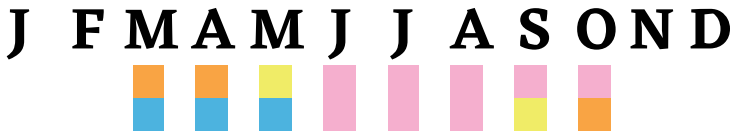
Grow beans in full sun on rich fertile, well manured soil with protection from strong winds. Plant broad beans in double rows set 25cm apart and allowing at least 60cm between each double row. Sow broad beans at a depth of 5cm deep and a distance of 25cm apart within each row and water well. When sown indoors in pots plant one per module or small pot at the same depth.

When growing broad beans, support the plants by placing a cane or stick at each corner of a double row and tying in with string, especially in windy gardens. Keep well watered, particularly as flowers begin to set and hoe between rows regularly. Pinch out the growing tips after the first flowers have set pods to deter blackfly and encourage further pods to set.

When picking pods to shell, wait until the beans are visible through the pod. But don't leave them too long – the scar on the bean should still be white or green, not black, as the beans will become tough at this stage. Small beans are sweeter and more tender than large ones.



Calendula



These easy-to-grow hardy annuals flower from summer through to early autumn, making them a great choice for summer borders and containers. The flowers are good for cutting, have edible petals and are also used by herbalists to make skincare products. Plants often self-seed from year to year. Calendulas are unfussy plants that do well in most ordinary garden soil, including poor, dry soil. They flower best in full sun, but also tolerate light shade.

Sow indoors in October, or from March to April in trays. Sow seed thinly at a depth of 0.5cm. Keep moist until germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors in late April or May.

Direct sow seeds outdoors where they are to grow in May and September. Choose a position in full sun on well drained soil which has been raked to a fine tilth. Sow seeds thinly, at a depth of 1cm in drills spaced 10cm apart and lightly cover seed to exclude light. Water the ground regularly, especially during dry periods. When seedlings are large enough to handle, thin them out to 20-30cm apart.

For early spring flowering, sow calendula in early autumn; in September seed can be direct sown, in October it is recommended you sow the seed indoors and grow plants on in a cool greenhouse or conservatory before planting out as above in March and April.

Water regularly until plants are fully established. Dead head Calendula regularly to provide a summer long display.



Height: to 70cm
Spread: to 45cm
Hardy annual
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
5 - 10 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

Cauliflower: All The Year Round



Sow seed outdoors in April, September and October into a well prepared seedbed, for transplanting to their final positions later on. Sow at a depth of 2cm and distance of 25cm between rows. Outdoor sowings should be thinned to 7-10cm apart and once plants are 15cm tall, they can be lifted and transplanted to their final planting positions. Protect autumn sowings with a cloche or fleece to protect them through the winter.

Sow indoors from February and March at a depth of 1cm in trays of free-draining, compost and cover with a layer of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a plastic bag until germination. Once germinated, grow Cauliflower plants on in cooler conditions until all risk of frost has passed and plants are large enough to be transplanted with 2-3 true leaves.

Gradually acclimatise them to outdoor conditions before planting out. Gradually harden off before planting out, spacing plants 45cm apart between plants and 60cm between the rows for large curds.

Cover with a protective netting or fleece to prevent attack from birds and insects. Water the plants thoroughly after planting. Feed with a nitrogen-rich liquid food every fortnight.



Height: to 60cm
Spread: to 45cm
Hardy annual
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
7 - 12 days
Harvest:
From 18 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Coriander



A hardy annual herb, Coriander makes a pretty clump of fresh green leaves in a sunny or partially shaded spot, in the ground or in a container. A relative of parsley, coriander is grown for its tangy leaves as well as its aromatic seeds, which are used to flavour many dishes. With careful planning it is possible to have a supply of Coriander all through the year.

Sow seed thinly at a depth of 1cm outdoors in April, June and September in rows 30cm apart. When large enough to handle, thin seedlings to 25cm apart.

Indoors sow seed shallowly in pots or trays in March for planting out in May, once all risk of frost has passed. After germination, and once the plants are large enough to handle pot on into individual 7.5cm pots. You can begin to harvest the leaves from these plants prior to planting out. For October sown seeds, once potted on these should remain indoors, on a cool windowsill with plenty of sunlight, or in a greenhouse for harvesting throughout the winter.

Coriander plants can quickly run to flower if not kept watered. When growing coriander for its leaves, remove the flowering stems as they occur to prolong quality leaf production. However, if you wish to harvest the seed depending on the weather and variety, you should be able to harvest aromatic coriander seeds from spring sown seed in mid to late summer

To harvest the seeds, cut off the plant's withering flowers close to the ground before the seeds are fully ripe. This will stop the seeds from falling off too easily. Hang them on a string (or spread them out) to dry for about two weeks. Coriander seeds are ripe as soon as the seed heads take on a light brown colour.



Height: to 60cm
Spread: to 25cm
Hardy annual
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
7 - 10 days
Harvest:
From 5 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Nigella

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Nigella, also known as Love-in-a-mist, is a wonderful cottage garden plant and a great filler. The airy foliage makes a nice complement to broader-leaved plants. Nigella is a short-lived plant and probably won't make it through an entire growing season. For continuous blooms throughout the summer, make succession plantings every three weeks. Once your plants have begun to scatter seeds on their own, you won't need to continue sowing.

Culinary note: The seeds of Nigella have a strong aroma and spicy taste, they can be used as a condiment or spice to flavour cakes, breads and curries.





Sow seed outdoors where they are to flower, Nigella do not transplant very well. Prepare the ground by raking until it is fine and crumbly, removing any large stones. Sow 5mm deep, either in rows 30cm apart, or by broadcasting the seed into the desired growing area and raking it over. When large enough to handle, thin seedlings to 15cm apart.

Nigella is fast growing so dead heading encourages new flowers. For dried arrangements, cut seed heads before they burst open.



Height: to 60cm
Spread: to 35cm
Hardy annual
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
14 - 21 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

Orlaya

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Orlaya makes an easy to grow, quick border filler. It gives lovely fern-like foliage and clusters of pure white flowers, similar to lace-cap hydrangeas, with its flowers composed of small inner florets framed by large outer ones, forming a pretty pattern which is reminiscent of lace-cap hydrangeas. Planted en masse, the luminous white petals have a shimmering effect, creating a soft haze which melds plant masses together, immediately capturing that romantic cottage garden vibe. Long straight stems and soft ferny foliage add to its appeal. Holding up beautifully in a vase, Orlaya is a wonderful filler for indoor displays and a graceful addition to bouquets. Flowers appear over a long period, often until the first frosts. It's a great choice for wildlife gardens and is particularly attractive to hoverflies.

Best sown where they are to flower in spring, or late summer/early autumn for overwintering. Sprinkle Orlaya seeds on the surface of a prepared garden bed and gently rake them over - firmly covering them isn't required as they need light to germinate. It is recommended you moisten the soil before sowing the seeds and once sown keep them moist until germination. Thin out the seedlings to 30cm apart once they're well grown. Orlaya will grow best in sun and in a deep rich, moist yet well drained soil. For early flowering plants, sow Orlaya seed in modules in autumn and overwinter in a cold frame, planting them out in April.



Height: to 75cm
Spread: to 50cm
Hardy annual
Full sun
Germination:
21 - 30 days



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Flower

Parsley

J F M A M J J A S O N D



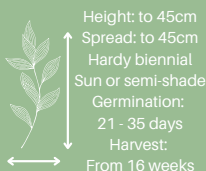
Native to the Mediterranean, parsley is a rich source of vitamin C and iron, and is said to cure bad breath and cleanse the skin. Easy to grow, even in part shade, parsley can be grown in containers or borders, and freshly picked leaves will depth and flavour to your cooking. According to an old English folk tale, parsley grows best in a household where the wife wears the trousers. Whether you choose to grow parsley for mythical or feminist reasons, or for its culinary and medicinal properties, it's a great addition to your herb collection.

Grow curled and flat-leaf parsley in moist but well-drained soil in sun to partial shade. Harvest the leaves as and when you need to. Sow seed every few weeks for a successional harvest.

Direct sow parsley seed outdoors from May to July. Grow parsley in a well prepared seedbed in full sun or partial shade. Sow seeds thinly at a depth of 1cm in drills 30cm apart. When large enough to handle, thin out seedlings to 25cm apart. Parsley seeds are very slow to germinate taking up to 35 days, especially in wet, cold soils.

Seeds can also be sown indoors August to April for fresh leaves all year round. Sow into 7.5cm pots of free-draining seed compost. After gemination thin pot grown parsley to a few strong seedlings per pot and keep on a sunny windowsill for easy picking as required, or if preferred gradually acclimatise parsley plants to outdoor conditions over 7 - 10 days before planting outdoors when risk of frost has passed.

Feed and water parsley plants regularly. Harvest parsley leaves regularly to encourage fresh new growth. Parsley is biennial and will require replacing after the second season once it begins to flower and produce seed.



Rocket

J F M A M J J A S O N D



A year-round favourite, sow Rocket seeds April to September outdoors and October to March indoors.

Sow seed thinly direct outside or in a pot on the windowsill or in a greenhouse at 3 to 4 weekly intervals for regular harvests throughout the year. When sowing outdoors, sow seed 1cm deep, in drills 30cm apart. Thin seedlings to 25cm apart, or leave unthinned as baby salad leaves. For indoor sowing thin to 2 seedlings per 9cm pot.

Keep the soil moist, watering in dry spells, to ensure consistent growth and prevent plants running to seed (bolting) prematurely. Give rocket some shade in hot weather, to prevent the leaves becoming tough and unpalatable. Cover with fleece or make summer sowings in a spot that gets some light shade.

Rocket typically flowers between May and August. Most rocket flowers are edible, however do check individual seed packs for confirmation. If you allow some plants to flower and produce seeds, they'll self-sow to give you new plants without any effort. When harvesting pick a few leaves from several plants. If you take lots of leaves from one plant, growth will be weakened.



Height: to 15cm
Spread: to 15cm
Hardy annual
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
7 - 10 days
Harvest:
From 6 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Scabious stellata

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Scabious, also known as pincushion flowers, are easy-to-grow. They are button-like in shape and have petals that flutter in the breeze. Under ideal growing conditions, blooms can last from spring to the first frost, although they might slow down in the high heat of summer. As pretty as the flowers of *Scabious stellata* are, it's the seed heads which are the true showstopper! The spherical seed heads are a silvery colour similar to the seed heads of Honesty (*Lunaria*). Equally useful as a cut fresh flower or seed head, Ping Pong (our favourite variety) gives several handfuls of stems from a single plant alone.

Sow *Scabious stellata* indoors in early spring or autumn. Sow seed thinly, lightly cover with compost or vermiculite and keep moist. These seeds may benefit from gentle heat to encourage germination, often a windowsill will be sufficient. Initially, water the seeds from below and keep the soil damp but not wet and do not exclude light. Place in a propagator or seal the seed tray inside a polythene bag until after germination.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When *Scabious* plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days and plant out.

If using the seed heads in floral arrangements, a light spritz of hairspray will make them more robust. *Scabious* will self-seed in borders from one year to the next.



Height: to 90cm
Spread: to 40cm
Hardy annual
Full sun
Germination:
10 - 21 days



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Flower

Spinach



Direct sow outdoors March - May and July to October in an open sunny position. Sow seeds at 3 week intervals for continuous cropping. Sow seed thinly, 1cm deep in broad drills 30cm apart. Thin seedlings to 5cm apart when large enough to handle. Water regularly through the season.

Before sowing enrich the soil by adding garden compost to the area you will be growing Spinach in, approx. 2 buckets per metre squared and raking until it is fine and crumbly, removing any large stones.

Protect the plants from birds by covering them with netting or fleece.

Harvest by picking a few leaves from each plant rather than stripping a whole plant. Snap leaves off close to the ground. If there are more leaves ready than you can use it is still best to pick them to encourage a steady supply of young green leaves, particularly as Spinach tends to bolt and get bitter when temperatures rise.



Height: to 50cm
Spread: to 45cm
Hardy biennial
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
6 - 10 days
Harvest:
From 6 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Spring Bulbs

For the most part Spring Bulbs whatever kind they are a relatively easy to grow, put them into the ground in the Autumn (September to November) at twice their depth and space them three times their distance apart and they'll happily do their own thing flowering in the spring.

Daffodils: Daffodils range in height from about 5cm up to 45cm, and come in a variety of colours and forms apart from the usual yellow trumpets. The variety included with Seasons is Acropolis, a white double with a pink toned centre. Daffodils do best in full sun but will tolerate light shade. Plant them in a moist but free-draining soil. Daffodils can be grown in containers, in borders or naturalised in lawns.

Tulips: Nothing says springtime has well and truly arrived more than a collection of pretty tulips. These flowers bloom in April and May and boast a range of different varieties which create colourful displays. Included within Seasons is a mixed of fringed pastel Tulips which you can expect to flower from later March. A note of caution, don't plant your Tulip bulbs until late October, doing so reduces the risk of Tulip Fire.

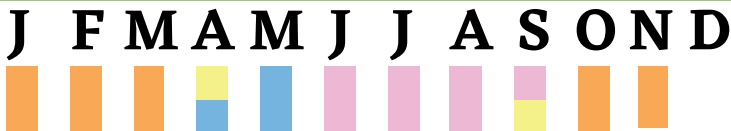
Iris: Dwarf Iris flowers are one of the first types of blooms to announce the start of Spring. They are compact plants that reach only 6 inches tall, and grow in shades of blue and yellow. The Reticulata varieties included in Seasons have more varied shades and also a delightful fragrance. Dwarf Iris are a breeze to grow and naturalize and will multiply easily.

Crocus: Our Botanical Mix of Crocuses works perfectly with the Irises, coming in blues, whites, yellows and purples, some are interspersed with striped blooms create a vibrant effect to greet early spring. Botanical Species Crocuses bloom earlier than normal crocuses.

Alliums: When we think of alliums it's often the large purple lollipops on tall stems, not with Allium Roseum. This will give you narrow, grass-like mid-green leaves, and small, loose umbels of pale pink, cup-shaped flowers in late spring.

To get the most from all bulbs and continue their display in future years, deadhead when the flowers begin to fade and leave the foliage to die down.

Sweet Pea



Sweet Pea seeds can be sown outdoors in September and April in their intended flowering site 2cm deep. Pinch out the growing points of each stem once the second pair of leaves has opened to encourage bushier growth.

In October and November and January through to March Later sow Sweet Peas in 9cm pots, with 5 seeds in each. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a plastic bag germination. Once germinated, grow sweet peas on in cooler conditions, before transferring to a cold frame for overwintering. Pinch out the growing points of each stem once the second pair of leaves has opened to encourage bushier growth.

In spring, plant out sweet peas at a distance of 25cm apart in any well drained garden soil in full sun. Train the stems onto a suitable support such as trellis or a free standing climbing frame.

Feed and water sweet peas regularly throughout the growing season. When growing sweet peas it is essential to cut the flower stems frequently and deadhead faded blooms to prevent seedpods developing. This will encourage more blooms to be produced and extend the flowering period throughout summer.

Caution: Sweet Pea seeds are harmful if eaten.



Height: to 180cm
Spread: to 30cm
Half-hardy annual
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
10 - 21 days



- Sow inside
- Sow outside
- Plant out
- Harvest
- Flower

My Gardening Notes

My Gardening Notes

My Gardening Notes

My Gardening Notes

More from Collie Flowers

The Collections:

Summer Salads

The Greenhouse Collection

Winter Vegetable

Bedding & Borders

The Kitchen Garden

Flowers for container growing

The F1 Seed Collection

The Cottage Garden

The Essential Herb Garden

Taste The Rainbow

Grow Your Own Christmas
Dinner

Vegetables for container
growing

Mini Bundles

Brassicas

Essential Edibles

Perfect for Pollinators

Half-Hardy Annuals

Herbal Infusions

Hardy Annuals

And not forgetting...

Seasons, our quarterly seed subscription tailored
to what you want to grow in your garden



Access our complete
range of online
growing advice:



To find out more about Collie Flowers
visit our website:
www.collieflowers.co.uk

You can keep up to date with our
news online by following us:



[@collieflowers.co.uk](https://www.instagram.com/collieflowers)