

# COLLIE FLOWERS



**Making The Most Of  
Every Season**

## **The Spring Collections 2025: Pocket Companion & Growing Guide**



# Ready, Steady, Grow

As spring unfurls its gentle embrace, the joy of gardening blooms anew across the verdant landscapes of the UK. With the warming sun and the soft patter of April showers, there's a palpable sense of anticipation as gardeners eagerly prepare to sow seeds. There's magic in the act of nurturing life from tiny seeds, tenderly placing them in the rich soil, and watching them sprout into vibrant green shoots. Each day brings a new revelation, as delicate tendrils reach towards the sky, embracing the promise of renewal and growth.

In the tranquil rhythm of the garden, there's a profound connection to the natural world. As the earth awakens from its winter slumber, there's an inherent sense of wonder in witnessing the transformation from seed to seedling, and ultimately to flourishing plant. There's a therapeutic quality to the act of gardening, as hands work the soil, fostering life and coaxing beauty from the earth. Amidst the hustle and bustle of modern life, there's solace to be found in the simplicity of tending to a garden, where the passage of time is marked by the gentle unfurling of leaves and the subtle shift of seasons.

No matter whether you want to fill your borders with flowers, become self-sufficient with food from your allotment, are growing in containers or have a sprawling garden, with Seasons and your Collie Flowers' Pocket Companion guiding you, this spring you'll be able to grow amazing vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Within this digital edition of the Spring Collections' Pocket Companion you'll find information covering all the different seeds sent out across the 18 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, completed using a colour coded key, so you know the main stages of growing each seed each month
- 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.

# Astrantia Major



Astrantia are an excellent garden plant and cut flower with zigzag petals resembling a Tudor ruff. Astrantia seeds may benefit from being cold stratified before they germinate. Seeds sown February to May, may benefit from spending 2 weeks in the fridge to replicate cold stratification. During the February, May, September and October, sow seeds in a greenhouse or cold frame, thinly on the surface of a good quality seed compost, covering with a fine layer of compost and vermiculite to help exclude the sunlight during germination. Make sure your seeds are well-watered and put them in a propagator or polythene bag until germination. Once the seedlings are well grown with at least 2 sets of true leaves pot on, protecting them from harsh frosts until they are ready to be planted out. Harden off for 7-10 days prior to planting out in March for autumn sown seed and May or June for seed sown that year.

Astrantia can be very slow to germinate, do not use artificial heat to try to encourage germination as this will disrupt their natural rhythms. Please be very patient, and even when you've given up hope of germination, keep your seed tray as you will likely be surprised by growth when you least expect it.

Remove spent flowers as soon as possible to encourage more flowers to grow. A great flower dried as well as fresh. Astrantia will grow happily in sun or light shade, and whilst it will grow in heavy shade the foliage will become lush but very few flowers will grow.

Astrantia are a hardy perennial which after 2/3 years can be divided in spring. It is recommended established plants are fed early in the spring and again in the middle of the summer with a good all-purpose soluble fertilizer. Astrantias require very little care. Cut the foliage and flowers hard back in autumn or spring.



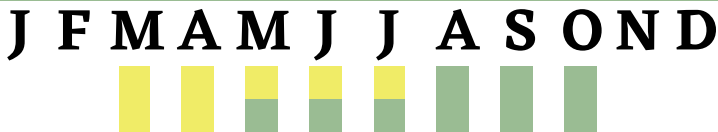
Height: to 60cm  
Spread: to 45cm  
Hardy perennial  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
28 - 80 days



- Orange Sow inside
- Yellow Sow outside
- Blue Plant out
- Pink Flower



# Beetroot



Direct sow beetroot seeds outdoors from March to July in a weed free, sunny position in fertile, light, well drained soil. For regular harvests throughout the season, sow seed at 2 to 3 week intervals. The "Boltardy" variety of beetroot is best if you're sowing early. White and golden varieties take less time to grow ready for harvesting.

Sow beetroot seeds thinly in shallow drills at a depth of 1cm and 30cm apart. Water regularly until the leaves begin to sprout. At the beginning, your seeds need plenty of water to start the germination process. The roots will take moisture from the soil once they're established. When large enough to handle, thin out the seedlings within each row to 5 - 7cm apart.

Beetroot can also be grown in containers. If doing so, choose a container at least 20cm deep and 20cm in diameter, filling with good multipurpose compost. Sow at a depth of 1cm, but place the seeds closer together than in the open ground.

Beetroots are ready to harvest when they are the size of a small orange; too large and they won't be as tasty.



Height: to 45cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
12 - 24 days  
Harvest:  
from 8 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Bells of Ireland

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




*Moluccella laevis* (Bells of Ireland) has tall spikes of fresh apple-green bells arranged all the way up the stem. An outstanding foliage plant that adds interest to borders and bouquets.

For the best results the seeds of Bells of Ireland need cold stratification to germinate. Expose seeds to the cold by refrigerating them for a week before sowing them indoors.

You can sow Bells of Irelands indoors between March and April, or direct sow the seeds outside from in May. Sprinkle seeds on the surface of good quality seed compost or directly onto the soil. Bells of Ireland require light to germinate, and there is no need to cover them. 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/water spray. 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.



Height: to 60cm  
Spread: to 40cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full Sun  
Germination:  
14 - 21 days

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# Brachyscome

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



With its soft-textured foliage and dainty blossoms, Brachyscome (aka Swan River Daisy) makes a colorful addition to the garden. Depending on the location, swan river daisies, can be grown as annuals or perennials - in the UK we grow them as annuals. When they bloom in summer, the prolific flowers cover the whole plant in blossoms, almost hiding the soft, feathery gray-green foliage.

Sow Bracyscome seed indoors from March to April on the surface of a good quality seed compost, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until gemination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 9cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When Bracyscome plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil .

Alternatively, direct sow the seeds where they are to flower in May. In a weed free area, sow seed thinly in drills 3mm deep. After germination and when the plants are large enough to handle, thin then to 30cm apart. Water regularly, until the pants are established.

In a hot dry season plants may exhaust themselves early, but a further sowing in late spring will ensure continuity, especially if potted up at the end of the season.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 20cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full Sun  
Germination:  
14 - 30 days

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

# Broccoli,

## Autumn Calabrese



Sow broccoli seeds in modules or seed trays indoors from March to May or in a well-prepared seed bed from June and July at a depth of 1cm and spaced 15cm apart. Transplant to their final positions around 5 weeks later when the seedlings have four or five leaves and when all chance of frost has passed.

When growing Broccoli, choose a sheltered position in firm, rich fertile, well drained soil in full sun. Prepare the soil in early spring by adding plenty of well rotted farmyard manure to the soil to improve its structure and fertility. Take care when transplanting Broccoli as it resents root disturbance.

Plant at a distance of 25cm apart, and cover with a protective netting or fleece to prevent attack from birds and insects. Water the plants thoroughly after planting. Broccoli thrives in moist soil, check the soil regularly and make sure it isn't dry.

You can harvest the Broccoli heads when they're tight and green, with a reasonable stalk. Cut at an angle, leaving the rest of the plant to encourage side growth which can then be harvested in the following weeks.



Height: to 60cm  
Spread: to 60cm  
Hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
10 - 14 days  
Harvest:  
From 11 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Carrots



Early maturing varieties: sow under cloches in March, or unprotected outdoors from April to August.

Maincrop varieties: Sow outdoors from April to June.

Direct sow carrot seed outdoors, in a weed free, sunny position in fertile, light, well drained soil. Carrots dislike freshly manured soils so seed beds are best prepared in autumn, with the soil finely sieved, well in advance of spring sowings. Sow carrot seeds thinly at a depth of 1cm in drills 30cm apart. Germination will take 10 to 20 days. When large enough to handle, thin out the seedlings within each row to 5cm apart. Where space is limited, growing carrots in containers of soil, not compost, will also produce a good crop.

Carrot fly is a well known problem. Prevention is the best cure; sow seed thinly and avoid crushing the foliage as you thin out seedlings or hand weed. Barriers 60cm high will exclude the low-flying female flies who lay the larvae.

Forcing varieties: Some varieties are suitable for forcing to produce an early crop. These can be sown under glass from November to February.

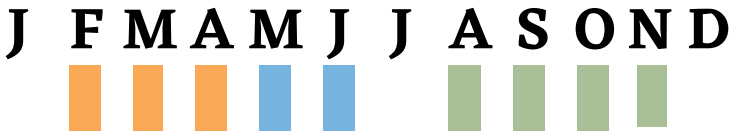


Height: to 45cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
15 - 28 days  
Harvest:  
from 12 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Celery Leaf



Leaf celery, also called cutting celery and soup celery, is darker, leafier, and has thinner stalks. The leaves have a strong, almost peppery flavor that makes for a great accent in cooking. We advise against direct sowing leaf celery, but once it gets going is easy to grow.

Sow celery leaf seeds from February to April on the surface of a good free draining, damp seed compost and cover with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite or compost. Place in a propagator or seal the container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Transplant when large enough to handle into trays or individual modules. Grow on steadily in cooler conditions, when seedlings are 6-7cm tall, gradually harden off before planting out once all risk of frost has passed.

Celery Leaf doesn't require blanching or earthing up as you would with stem-celery. All types of celery require very regular watering throughout the summer and it is essential plants are kept moist throughout the growing season.

Harvest a few stems and leaves from each plant to extend the harvest period rather than exhausting a single plant.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Half hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
10 - 15 days  
Harvest:  
From 9 weeks

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Climbing French Bean

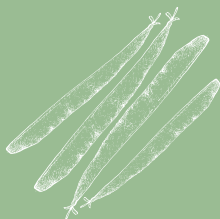


Sow climbing bean seeds indoors from mid April for transplanting later on, or direct sow outdoors from late May to July.

Indoors, sow bean seeds at a depth of 4cm in 7.5cm pots or trays of free-draining, seed sowing compost. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a plastic bag until germination. Do not exclude light as this helps germination, and keep pots moist. Once germinated, grow on in cooler conditions until all risk of frost has passed and the climbing bean plants are large enough to be transplanted.

Gradually acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 - 10 days before planting French beans outdoors in rich fertile, well drained soil in full sun with protection from strong winds. Climbing french beans grow best with support such as a trellis or teepee of 3 to 5 bamboo canes tied at the top with 1 plant per support.

Picking the beans stimulates your plants to produce more and gives you a longer harvest period. Although some bean varieties stay tender as they grow, others become more tough and stringy. Beans are best picked when they are still small and tender.



# Coleus

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



Forget the flowers, Coleus is all about the foliage, no matter the variety, Coleus doesn't fail to delight with its mix of colours and leaf type to give an interesting pot plant or bedding plant for mild areas but you must keep pinching out the flower buds otherwise it can go leggy. That said, their delicate blue spires can be a joy to see above the multicoloured patterns of the foliage.

Sow Coleus seed indoors from March to May on the surface of a good quality seed compost, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until germination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 9cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When Coleus plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil.

As a tender perennial if you can provide plants with a temperature of 5-10C through the winter, they may survive, otherwise treat as a half-hardy annual.

Coleus is actually an ornamental member of the mint family, native to Indonesia. Unlike Mint its roots will not spread across your garden and is safe to be planted in the ground.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 20cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full Sun  
Germination:  
7 - 21 days

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



# Cosmos



Cosmos will put on a continuous display throughout the summer months and well into autumn, standing on tall, slender stems which sway in the breeze creating that gorgeous soft and floaty effect. Perfect for a sunny spot in any mixed planting scheme, not only will they look great in the garden and be beneficial to pollinators, but they make lovely cut flowers too. Despite their delicate looks, these plants are pretty tough and will stay standing in rain or a drought.

Sow Cosmos seed indoors from February to April at a depth of 3mm in a good quality seed compost, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until germination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 7cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When Cosmos plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil at a distance of 45cm apart.





Alternatively, direct sow Cosmos seed where they are to flower in May. In a weed free area, sow seed thinly in drills 3mm deep. After germination and when the plants are large enough to handle, thin then to 45cm apart. Water regularly, until the plants are established.

Pinch out the growing tip of each stem when transplanting to encourage stems to branch and produce more Cosmos flowers. Deadhead faded Cosmos flowers regularly to encourage more blooms to be produced throughout the summer.

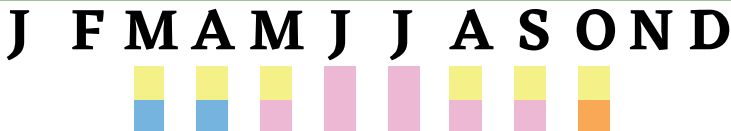


Height: to 100cm  
 Spread: to 60cm  
 Half-hardy annual  
 Full sun  
 Germination:  
 7 - 15 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# Cornflower



Cornflowers are easy to grow wild flowers and will give your garden the most wonderful blue flowers in the summer.





Sow cornflower seeds outdoors where they are to grow from March to May. Choose a position in full sun on well drained soil which has been raked to a fine tilth. Water the soil before sowing and allow the drill to drain. Sow seeds thinly, at a depth of 3mm in drills spaced 30cm apart. Water the ground regularly, especially during dry periods. When cornflower seedlings are large enough to handle, thin them out to 15cm apart.

Alternatively, grow cornflowers indoors from August to October for late spring and early summer flowering the next year. Sow cornflowers on the surface of a good quality seed compost at a temperature and cover with a very fine sprinkling of compost or vermiculite. Do not exclude light as this helps germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to move outdoors. Overwinter cornflowers plants in cool, light, frost-free conditions before planting out the following spring, or growing on as greenhouse pot plants.



Height: to 75cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
14 - 21 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# Courgette



Sow courgette seed indoors in March and April for transplanting later on, or direct sow outdoors from late May to June.

Sow seed at a depth of 2cm in 7.5cm pots of free-draining compost. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a plastic bag until germination. Do not exclude light, as this helps germination. Once germinated, grow on in cooler conditions until all risk of frost has passed and plants are large enough to be transplanted. Gradually acclimatise them to outdoor conditions before planting outdoors in rich fertile, well drained soil in full sun at a distance of 90cm apart, or into large containers or grow bags.

Cover with a protective netting or fleece to prevent attack from birds and insects. A thick mulch of organic matter spread around the plants will help to conserve moisture at the roots.

Courgette plants usually fruit for many months, from early summer, sometimes through to the first frost. Pick the courgettes when they're young and tasty, 10-12.5cm long. Regular harvesting, when the fruits are small, will encourage more to form.



Height: to 45cm  
Spread: to 90cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
7 - 10 days  
Harvest:  
from 12 weeks



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Harvest

# Cucumber



Sow Cucumber seeds from March to May for indoor cropping and for transplanting later on. Sow 2 cucumber seeds on their sides at a depth of 1cm in a 7.5cm pots of free-draining, seed sowing compost. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a plastic bag until germination. Protect the emerging seedlings from direct sunlight to avoid scorching. Prior to transplanting, discard the weaker of the 2 seedlings. Grow Cucumber plants on until they are large enough to be transplanted. Keep the compost moist. When cucumber plants are well grown, transplant them at a spacing of 2 plants per growbag or 45cm apart in a warm, humid greenhouse.

Outdoor varieties may also be direct sown outdoors from May to early June. These should be gradually acclimatised to outdoor conditions before transplanting into warm, well drained, humus rich soil in full sun, with shelter from winds. Plant outdoor cucumbers in single rows at a distance of 90cm apart. Water well after planting until cucumber plants are fully established. Ensure cucumber plants are supported with trellis or canes as they grow.

Unlike some fruits, cucumbers do not continue to develop after harvest. Ripe cucumbers have a firm, green flesh with the "burpless" varieties best harvested at 2.5-4 cm in diameter. Cut the stem 5mm above the fruit.

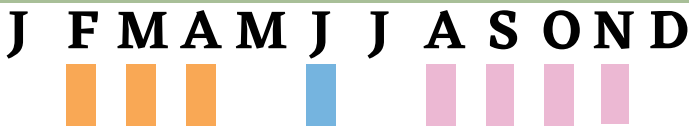


Height: to 200cm  
Spread: to 40cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full sun or greenhouse  
Germination:  
5-10 days  
Harvest:  
From 10 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Cyclamen



Beware: *Cyclamen hederifolium* (summer/autumn flowering) and *Cyclamen coum* (winter flowering) are not good companions. This guide focusses on *Cyclamen hederifolium*; a perennial to 15cm, with somewhat ivy-shaped leaves patterned with silvery-green, and pink, sometimes fragrant, flowers 2.5cm in width, darker around the mouth, opening before or with the leaves which die off in spring and summer.

Before sowing, soak seeds for 8-12 hours. Sow Cyclamen indoors (greenhouse or coldframe rather than a windowsill which may be too warm) in from February to April. Sow seed thinly on the surface of a good quality seed compost, lightly cover with compost or vermiculite and keep moist. Place in a propagator or seal the seed tray inside a polythene bag until after germination. **Cyclamen require absolute darkness and consistent temperature to germinate** in a cool greenhouse or coldframe. We recommend wrapping the propagator in tin foil or closing it inside a dark box until germination occurs. Initially, water the seeds from below and keep the soil damp but not wet and do not exclude light as they begin to grow. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors in June.

They are slow to germinate (30 - 90 days) and while most will flower in year one, it can take until the second year before you're rewarded with beautiful blooms. May self-seed freely. For best results grow in humus-rich soil in partial shade. Mulch annually with well-rotted leaf mould to prevent the tubers that will develop from drying out in summer, and from winter cold.



Height: to 15cm  
Spread: to 10cm  
Hardy perennial  
Partial shade  
Germination:

30 - 90 days



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Flower

# Erigeron

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



No matter the variety, Erigerons are versatile, easygoing and low maintenance plants. Delightful daisy like flowers give a mass of blooms over a long period from late spring until the end of autumn. Many are small, bushy, clump-forming plants, with others having a taller habit making them an excellent cut flower.




Sow Erigeron indoors in from January to March or in October. 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 Erigeron plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days and plant out.

Alternatively, direct sow Erigeron seed where they are to flower from April to June. In a weed free area, sow seed thinly in drills 3mm deep. After germination and when the plants are large enough to handle, thin to 30cm apart. Water regularly, until the plants are established.

Grow erigeron in any well drained soil, in sun or partial shade – avoid poorly drained, wet soils. Most don't need deadheading. Cut back straggly stems, but not the whole plant, at the end of the season. Erigerons are popular with bees, butterflies and other pollinators and self seed readily.



Height: to 60cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Hardy perennial  
Full sun  
Germination:  
14 - 21 days

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# Festuca Glauca

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



Grown for its stiff, architectural blue foliage, the Blue Fescue is a useful evergreen grass for year round interest. From early summer, the foliage is complemented by short, blue-green flower spikes. This hardy little perennial looks quite at home in patio pots, rockeries, gravel gardens and borders, mixing nicely with perennials, alpine or even small shrubs. *Festuca glauca* has a particularly neat, clump forming habit that remains nicely compact as it grows. This hardy evergreen grass is easy to grow and virtually maintenance free.

Sow indoors or outdoors in spring. Sow into moist, well-drained seed compost. Seed sown indoors should be transplanted when seedlings large enough to handle in clumps to a 1L pot filled with gritty compost. Allow to grow on under glass. Plant out in summer when well grown.

When sowing seed directly, sow 6mm deep into prepared soil in rows 30cm apart, direct germination can be erratic and slower than for seed sown indoors. Thin seedlings as required.

Prefers a poor to moderately fertile, well-drained to sharply drained soil in full sun. Feed annually in spring if desired. Propagate by division in spring.

The purple spikelets of *Festuca Glauca* will begin to appear from its second summer onwards.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Hardy perennial  
Full sun  
Germination:  
14 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Ornamental Grass

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



Ornamental grasses are diverse varieties from the grass family, including both true grasses and grass-like plants like sedges. They can be categorised as annuals or perennials and are known for their height, texture, color, or seasonal interest. These low-maintenance plants add color and texture to borders, gardens, and screens, and they also attract beneficial insects and birds.

Sow indoors or outdoors in spring. Sow into moist, well-drained seed compost. Seed sown indoors should be transplanted when seedlings large enough to handle in clumps to a 1L pot filled with gritty compost. Allow to grow on under glass. Plant out in summer when well grown.

When sowing seed directly, sow 6mm deep into prepared soil in rows 30cm apart, direct germination can be erratic and slower than for seed sown indoors. Thin seedlings as required.

Prefers a poor to moderately fertile, well-drained to sharply drained soil in full sun. Feed annually in spring if desired. Propagate by division in spring.

For long term maintenance check the individual guidance offered for each type of grass or sedge.



Average germination  
14 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest



# Hollyhock

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







Hollyhocks are easy to grow and their blooms come in a wide range of jewel colours, flowering from early summer to autumn. Their tall spires look good grown against walls and fences and are stalwarts of cottage gardens. At the base is a clump of large, round, mid-green leaves. The perfect plant for the rear of borders where it will rise up to 5 foot, and more.

Sow Hollyhock indoors in from January to March or July to September. Sow seed thinly on the surface of a good quality seed compost, 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, but if sowing over summer the greenhouse or a cold frame will suffice. 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 Spring sown *Erigeron* plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days and plant out. For summer sown plants, ensure they are in the ground whilst it is still warm and they have a chance to establish before the frosts.

Hollyhocks are full hardy and don't require any special treatment over winter. Remove all dead leaves and discard plants that have been badly effected by rust disease which Hollyhocks can be susceptible to. This is easy to spot as the leaves and stems will be covered in orange-brown spots. Remove infected leaves as soon as you spot them and burn them.



Height: to 150cm  
Spread: to 50cm  
Hardy perennial  
Full sun  
Germination:  
5 - 10 days

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# Lettuce, Little Gem



Direct sow lettuce seeds outdoors from March to September into well prepared, fertile, moist soil in sun or semi shade.

Sow seeds thinly at a depth of 1cm in drills 30cm apart in soil which has been raked to a fine tilth. We recommend watering the drill before sowing the seed as lettuce seed is fine and can easily be washed away with a first heavy watering.

When seedlings large enough to handle, thin out to 30cm apart and cover with a protective netting or fleece to prevent attack from birds and insects.

Sow successively, every 2 to 3 weeks for a long-lasting harvest of fresh salad leaves.

Lettuce is great for growing in troughs, window boxes or pots as well as rows in the kitchen garden.

Water well in hot weather to guard against bolting.

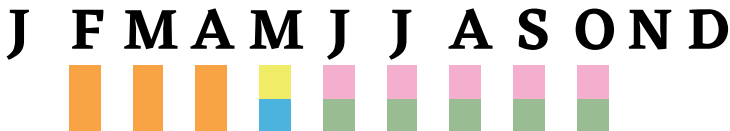


Height: to 15cm  
Spread: to 15cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
7 - 10 days  
Harvest:  
From 5 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Marigold



Sow Marigolds from February to March indoors or in a greenhouse in good seed compost. Just cover the seed with compost and keep the soil damp but not wet.

Marigolds can also be sown outdoors where they are to flower during April once the soil has warmed. Keep moist until after germination and thin out to 20-25cm apart.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, prick out and grow in cooler conditions. Gradually acclimatise to outdoor conditions for 10-15 days before planting out after all risk of frost, 20-25cm apart in a sunny spot.

Regular removal of dead flower heads will promote new growth and prolong the flowering season.

Whilst all Marigolds are edible, not all are known to be tasty! Therefore those supplied by Collie Flowers have passed a taste test so that as well as looking good on your salad they're not just there for decoration. Did you know also that some cultures use Marigolds as natural dyes too.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
5- 14 days  
Harvest:  
From 10 weeks



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

# Mesembryanthemum

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



Mesembryanthemum is an easy to grow annual bedding flower which produces colourful blooms throughout the summer. The daisy like flowers come in shades of red, magenta, pink, yellow, white and orange and open with the sun each day and turn to face it moving across the garden. Can tolerate drought and sandy soil and is a useful plant to brighten up rock gardens, walls and paths.

Sow Mesembryanthemum seed indoors from March to May on the surface of a good quality seed compost, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until germination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 9cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When Mesembryanthemum plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil. Feed and water until the plants are fully established, or if in a container water regularly as needed. Although the flowers are short-lived, regular deadheading will promote plenty of fresh blooms.

Mesembryanthemum leaves, stems and seeds are edible. However, as a number of different plants have the same common name - ice plant - be absolutely sure which plant you have before you start harvesting and serving it up. Mesembryanthemum leaves and stems can be steamed like spinach and have a salty, sharp taste.



Height: to 10cm  
Spread: to 10cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full Sun  
Germination:  
14 - 30 days

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

# Mizuna

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



Mizuna is a Japanese green with a mildly spicy flavour, perfect for eating raw or lightly cooked. The plants take up little space and are ideal in containers as well as in the ground. Sow repeatedly for generous harvests across most of the year. They are easy to grow from seed most of the year, in sun or light shade and moisture-retentive soil.

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 5mm 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 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.

Prefers cool, damp climates and is cold tolerant, so will usually continue cropping through autumn and winter, especially if given some protection. 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 20cm  
Hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
7 - 10 days  
Harvest:  
From 5 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Nemesia

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



Nemesias are colourful annuals and short-lived perennials, bearing wonderfully fragrant, colourful flowers from late spring right through to autumn. Nemesias originate from South Africa and are frost-tender. They flower in a range of colours, including orange, red, pink, purple, blue, and white, often with contrasting centres. Nemesias tend to be bushy and compact, suitable for growing at the front of a border or in pots, or trailing and therefore more suited to hanging baskets.

Sow Nemesia seed indoors from February to April on the surface of a good quality seed compost in modules, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until germination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination. Germination may be erratic in temperatures above 18°C. When seedlings are large enough to handle with the rootball filling the module, transplant into 9cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When Nemesia plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil.

Alternatively, direct sow the seeds where they are to flower in May. In a weed free area, sow seed thinly in drills 3mm deep. After germination and when the plants are large enough to handle, thin then to 30cm apart. Water regularly, until the plants are established. After first flowering, cut back to 4-5cm and you should get a second flush.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full Sun  
Germination:  
14 - 30 days

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

# Petunia



Petunias are some of the most outstanding bedding plants, thanks to their knack for creating a vibrant mass of colourful summer blooms. Petunias are versatile, ideal for different types of pot or hanging basket as well as in the ground. Petunias are divided into two main types: compact bushy petunias with an upright habit, and trailing petunias with stems up to 90cm long. Within both groups there's a huge choice of colours and flower shapes to choose from. Colours range from ultra-brilliant pinks, reds, and purples, to soft pastel shades and white. The size of the flowers ranges, too, and you can choose varieties with ruffled edges and bi-coloured blooms, along with single- and double-flowered varieties.

Sow petunia seeds indoors in February and March on the surface of a good seed compost and gently firm down. Lightly cover the seed with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet. Do not exclude light as this aids germination.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When petunia plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant into well drained soil at a distance of 30cm apart or grow in containers in full sun.



Height: to 30cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
10 - 21 days



- Sow inside
- Sow outside
- Plant out
- Flower

# Radish



Radishes grow well in most soils, but prefer rich, moist free draining soils.

Sow seeds very thinly 1cm deep in drills 15cm apart. Thin out the seedlings to 4cm as necessary. Sow at regular intervals from spring through summer in well cultivated soil. Because radishes grow so quickly, you can "inter-crop" them between slow-growing vegetables. Radishes also work well as companion plants, because they keep a lot of the bugs away from plants. Plant them alongside carrots, parsnips, and cabbages.

Keep the radish beds moist, but not soaked. Watering radishes frequently and evenly will result in quick growth; if radishes grow too slowly, they will develop a hot, woody taste

Radishes are typically ready to harvest when their roots are about 2.5cm in diameter. To harvest, lift the entire plant out of the ground using a small trowel.

Unlike many root vegetables, radishes cannot be left in the ground, as doing so will cause them to become tough and woody.



Hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
5 - 10 days  
Harvest:  
from 4 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest



# Runner Bean



Sow runner bean seed indoors from mid March for transplanting later on, or direct sow outdoors from mid April to late June.

Indoors, sow seed at a depth of 5cm in 7.5cm pots or trays of free-draining, seed sowing compost. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a plastic bag until germination. Once germinated, grow runner beans on in cooler conditions until all risk of frost has passed and runner bean plants are large enough to be transplanted. Gradually acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 - 10 days before planting runner beans outdoors in rich fertile, well drained soil in full sun or semi shade with protection from strong winds. Avoid freshly manured soil which will promote lush foliage instead of beans.

Alternatively direct sow runner beans outdoors at a depth of 5cm and a distance of 30cm apart. Plant runner beans in rows that are 1.5m apart, or where space is limited, grow beans onto a wigwam structure. Runner beans require support from garden canes, strings or netting which should be put in place at the time of planting.

When growing runner beans provide a thick mulch of organic matter around the base of the plants to help conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. Water runner beans regularly, particularly as the flowers develop, and provide a liquid feed every 14 days during mid-summer. Pinch out the tips of the beans when they reach the top of their supports. Beans can be harvested from July onwards. Pick the beans regularly and a little on the young side to ensure top quality and prolonged cropping.



# Salpiglossis

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



Salpiglossis is an upright annual, with slender stems and wavy-edged, lance-shaped leaves. From summer to autumn these plants produce masses of funnel-shaped flowers to 5cm across. This South American native loves cool weather and blooms from spring until the plant begins to fade in midsummer. However, don't be too quick to pull the fading plants as they will often produce a late-season burst of colour when temperatures drop in autumn.


Sow Salpiglossis seed indoors from March to April on the surface of a good quality seed compost, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until germination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 9cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When Salpiglossis plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil .

Alternatively, direct sow the seeds where they are to flower in May. In a weed free area, sow seed thinly in drills 3mm deep. After germination and when the plants are large enough to handle, thin then to 30cm apart. Water regularly, until the plants are established.

Salpiglossis does best during warm summers in a humus-rich, moist but well-drained soil in a site that is sunny and sheltered from cold winds.



Height: to 60cm  
Spread: to 30cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full Sun  
Germination:  
7 - 21 days

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

# Squash



Squashes come in a huge range of shapes and sizes, from massive pumpkins to tiny patty pans. They can grow snaking along the ground or up on a trellis, or other sturdy support.

From mid- to late April, sow the flat seeds on their side, 13mm deep, in 7.5cm pots of compost and keep in a greenhouse. Seeds can also be sown outdoors in the spot where they are to grow in late May or early June. Sow two or three seeds at each sowing site or in each pot. Leave in place for two weeks, or as long as possible, after germination. Thin the seedlings to leave the strongest one.

Indoor sown plants should be hardened off before planting out. Leave at least 1 metre between squash plants to avoid overcrowding. Squashes can be grown in fertile ground, and also in containers or growbags. Keep the soil or compost constantly moist by watering around the plants, not over them, this ensures the water goes down to the roots and doesn't sit around the neck of the plant, which can lead to rotting. Feed every 10-14 days with a high potassium liquid fertiliser, such as a tomato feed, once the first fruits start to swell.

Summer squash produce fruit for several months, from mid-summer onwards, sometimes right up to the first frost. Harvest their fruits when small and tasty, with a soft skin. Regular picking will encourage further fruits to form.

With winter squashes for storing, let the fruit mature on the plant and remove before the first frost. Ripen the skin until hard, by placing fruits in the sun for a week, either outdoors or in a greenhouse. This helps to ensure they keep well.

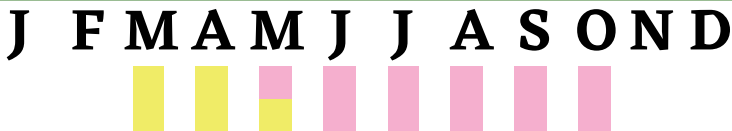


Height: to 45cm  
Spread: to 150cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
5 - 5 days  
Harvest:  
From 11 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Stock



Perfect for plugging gaps at the front of borders! Stocks are a quick and easy hardy annuals make an excellent standby, flowering just 4 weeks from sowing. This hardy annual boasts a fabulous, rich perfume and makes a great planting partner for Night Scented stocks (*Matthiola incana*). These bushy little plants offer excellent value in the garden, flowering over a long period and filling the air with fragrance. For the longest lasting display, sow Stock in succession, every few weeks throughout the Spring.

Direct sow Stock seeds outdoors where they are to grow from March to May. Choose a position in full sun on any well drained soil which has been raked to a fine tilth.





Sow seeds thinly, at a depth of 5mm either in drills spaced 15cm apart or in a rough broadcast across the intended flowering site and cover the seed with its own depth of soil to exclude light. Water the ground regularly, especially during dry periods.

When Stock seedlings are large enough to handle, thin them out to 15cm apart.

Water regularly until plants are fully established. Deadhead faded stock flowers to encourage more blooms to be produced.



Height: to 35cm  
Spread: to 20cm  
Hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
14 - 21 days

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# Strawberry Sticks

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



If you want to try something a bit different, *Chenopodium*, Strawberry Sticks has edible, arrow-shaped leaves can be used in vegetable salads during the summer and fruit, resembling little raspberries or strawberries make a tasty dessert in the autumn.

Sow Strawberry Sticks seed indoors from February to April on the surface of a good quality seed compost, and cover the seeds with a very fine sprinkling of vermiculite, or compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal it inside a polythene bag, keeping the soil damp but not wet until germination. Do not exclude light as this aids germination. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 7cm pots and grow them on in cooler conditions until large enough to plant outdoors. When plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over 7 to 10 days. Transplant outdoors in full sun in any moist, well drained soil at a distance of 45cm apart.

Alternatively, direct sow Strawberry Sticks seed where they are to flower in May. In a weed free area, sow seed thinly in drills 3mm deep. After germination and when the plants are large enough to handle, thin then to 45cm apart. Water regularly, until the plants are established.

You can pick a few leaves to eat in salads, the tasty fruit will form later and are best eaten fresh.



Height: to 60cm  
Spread: to 25cm  
Annual | semi-shade  
Germination: 10 - 14  
Harvest: from 16 weeks

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Summer Cauliflower



Sow seed indoors from February and March for an early harvest. Sow seeds 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.

Direct sow outdoors in April and May into a well prepared seedbed, for transplanting to their final positions later on. Sow at a depth of 1cm 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.

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

# Turnip



Early sowings are best made under cloches. Turnips grow best on rich well manured soil but will grow on ordinary fertile soil to which plenty of well rotted compost has been added .

Sow seeds in succession from March to mid summer direct into growing site in seed drills 2cm deep with rows spaced 30cm apart. Sucessional sowing should be made every 2 to 3 weeks to prolong the harvest period.

As soon as first rough leaves appear , thin to 10cm (4in) apart . Harvest from when roots are golf ball size, pull alternate roots to maximise crop. Water regularly during hot dry weather to prevent roots from going woody

Turnips can also be multisown in modules and transplanted into final position in June as small clusters and harvested as small roots and added to salads.

Turnips should be grown quickly and kept well watered. Harvest them before they get too large for the best flavour. The smaller the roots, the sweeter they are.



Height: to 25cm  
Spread: to 25cm  
Hardy annual  
Sun or semi-shade  
Germination:  
7 - 10 days  
Harvest:  
From 9 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

# Watermelon



There is nothing quite as wonderful as the sweet fragrance of a crop of melons in a greenhouse. Sow Melon seed indoors on edge (not flat) to prevent rotting 1.5cm deep in individual 9cm pots in a greenhouse, propagator or on a sunny windowsill.

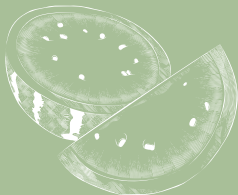
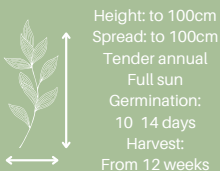
When the plants are about 10cm tall, plant out into final positions into large pots or growbags either in a greenhouse or sunny conservatory. Water regularly, and feed with an all purpose fertiliser once a week after the fruits begin to form

Melons need to be provided with some form of support and the stems should be tied in as required. Once the main stem reaches 60cm, pinch out the growing tip to encourage side laterals to grow. Select the four strongest laterals then pinch these out once they have produced 3 more leaves to encourage more side breaks. These side breaks should be pinched out after 2 leaves, then allow a further side break to grow and pinch out after 1 leaf.

Hand pollination will be required, remove male flowers after they have been used. There are a couple other ways to hand pollinate your cantaloupe plants:

1. You can use an artist paint brush to transfer the pollen, however, this method is time consuming and not as effective.
2. The best way to hand pollinate your cantaloupe plants is by using your hand and plucking a male flower and transferring the pollen to the female flower.

Check your melons regularly as the harvest time draws near. Look at the rind and prepare to pick them when they change from green to tan or yellow. Another indication of ripeness is a crack in the stem where it attaches to the fruit.





# Zinnia

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



Zinnia's are mostly annual plants, popular because of the colourful, daisy-like flowers. Native to Mexico, there are 18 species and hundreds of cultivated forms, which are grown as annual bedding plants. Flowers come in vivid colours from red, orange and deep pink to green, with a lovely long flowering season from summer to the first frosts. Zinnias are perfect for filling gaps in the border and also work well in container displays. Long stemmed varieties make great cut flowers and single-flowered varieties are attractive to pollinating insects.

Sow seeds from March and April in individual pots or module trays of moist seed compost and cover seeds with a very fine sprinkling of compost or vermiculite. Place container in a propagator or warm place, and keep at a temperature of between 20-25C. After sowing, do not exclude light as this helps germination. Keep the surface of the compost moist but not waterlogged. When well grown, gradually acclimatise young plants to outdoor conditions for a few weeks before planting out after all risk of frost, 20-30cm apart, taking care not to damage the root system.


Zinnia can also be sown outside in May once the soil has warmed, 3mm deep in drills 30cm apart in well-cultivated soil which has been raked to a fine tilth. When large enough to handle, thin out seedlings to 20cm apart.

Zinnia are best planted in well-drained soil in full sun, but with some shelter from strong winds. The flowers have long stems and are long lasting as a cut flower.



Height: to 75cm  
Spread: to 45cm  
Half-hardy annual  
Full sun  
Germination:  
10 - 24 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

# My Gardening Notes

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The Greenhouse Collection

Winter Vegetable

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The Kitchen Garden

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The Cottage Garden

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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

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