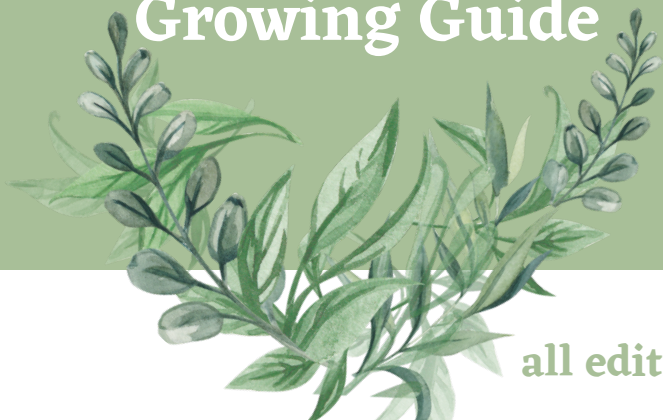




Let's Get Growing!

The Winter Collection:
Pocket Companion &
Growing Guide



all editions

Ready, Steady, Grow

Winter can be a quiet time in the garden, as many plants are dormant. But if your green fingers are itching and you're craving some time outdoors, there's still plenty to do in the garden during the winter months. There are also plenty of plants to enjoy at this time of year. And that's what Seasons is all about - making the most of every one of them, with jobs to do and beauty surrounding us.

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, your Collie Flowers' Pocket Companion and the Sow & Grow app guiding you, this winter you'll be making a head start on growing amazing vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Within the Pocket Companion you'll find information on 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.

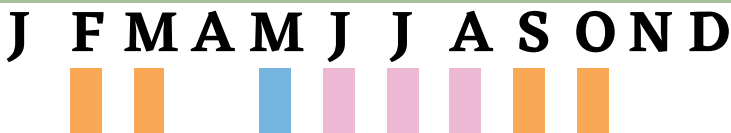
'thin out seedlings': careful removal of seedlings that are growing too close together. Water the row of seedlings well and then pull out the excess seedlings, leaving a row of single healthy seedlings at the correct spacing from one another.

'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.

Verbascum



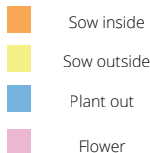
Verbascum, or mullein, is a striking biennial or short-lived perennial known for its tall flower spikes and rosette foliage. Verbascum adds bold vertical structure to borders, with spikes reaching 1-2m and blooms in shades of yellow, white, pink, purple or orange depending on variety. Flowers emerge from a basal rosette of handsome, felted leaves between June and September. Native to dry regions of Europe and Turkey, Verbascum thrives in full sun and poor, well-drained soils, showing excellent drought tolerance. Many cultivars self-seed freely, ensuring continuity in the garden. Though short-lived, they are reliable, hardy to severe frosts, and ideal companions for grasses or cottage-style planting. Cutting back spent spikes encourages fresh growth and prolongs their display.

Sow Verbascum seed indoors from in early Autumn or late Winter 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.

First year flowering is possible from autumn sown seeds, those sown in late winter are more likely to flower in the second year.



Height: to 180cm
Spread: to 60cm
Hardy Perennial
Full sun
Germination:
14 - 30days



Tomato



Sow seeds February to April on the surface of a good, free-draining, damp, seed sowing mix and cover with a fine sprinkling of compost or vermiculite. Place seed trays in a propagator until after germination. When seedlings gain 2 true leaves, transplant into individual 7.5cm pots, and grow on.

In a greenhouse tomato plants may be transplanted at the end of May or when the first flowers are showing, if earlier. Allow 3 plants per growbag, or one per 25cm pot, or plant directly into the greenhouse soil.

When growing tomatoes outdoors, wait until all risk of frost has passed before transplanting. Gradually acclimatise to outdoor conditions before planting out from early June when plants are at least 20cm tall. Choose a sheltered position in full sun on fertile, reliably moist, well drained soil, and transplant at a distance of 60cm apart.

For cordon varieties put a cane into the soil next to each plant to support them as they grow, and tie each main stem to its support with soft garden twine. From late June cut back the leaves by half to allow air to circulate and light to access the fruits, helping avoid blight and promote ripening. Incorporate a weekly feed into your watering schedule once the first truss has set.



Height: to 150cm
Spread: to 50cm
Half hardy annual
Full sun
Germination:
5 - 10 days
Harvest:
From 10 weeks



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Harvest

Summer Sprouting Broccoli



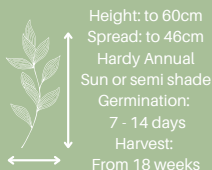
Summer Sprouting Broccoli is specifically bred for summer cropping tolerating summer heat with no need for a winter chill to produce excellent crops. With this variety you'll get tender purple spears from summer through to the first frosts.

Sow thinly 6mm deep in a seed tray of good quality seed compost and lightly cover with a sprinkling of vermiculite. Place tray in a propagator until after germination. Transplant seedlings into 7.5cm pots and grow on until plants have 4-5 true leaves.

When growing purple sprouting 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.

Plant purple sprouting broccoli deeply for stability at a distance of 60cm apart, and cover with a protective netting or fleece to prevent attack from birds and insects. Water the plants thoroughly after planting.

Harvest regularly, cutting the central spear with a sharp knife first as this encourages the side shoots to develop quickly.



Summer Pansy



Pansies are short-lived perennials, popular for using in colourful pot and border displays. Their colourful flowers are often prettily marked in the centre and look like faces – sometimes with darker blotches, or ‘whiskered’, or plain. An enormous range of flower colours and variations includes blue, mauve, pink, purple, red, yellow, and white, they’re often bicoloured with a mixture of shades too. Pansies flower all year round but are particularly useful in winter, when little else is in bloom (see Winter Pansy for relevant growing information for these types).

Sow on the surface of lightly firmed, moist seed compost in pots or trays. Cover with a very fine sprinkling of compost or vermiculite. Do not exclude light as this helps germination. Too high a temperature can prevent germination.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into pots or trays. Gradually acclimatise plants to cooler conditions for a few weeks before planting out after all risk of frost, 20cm apart, or plant into containers.

Overwinter September and October sowings in a cold frame then plant out the following spring. Regular removal of dead heads encourages new flowers to ensure a continuous display.



Height: to 15cm
Spread: to 20cm
Hardy perennial
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
14-21 days



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

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

Rhubarb



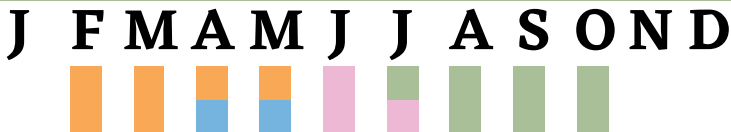
Rhubarb is one of those plants that earns its keep in the garden. Once established, it's a hardy perennial that comes back year after year with very little fuss. The tart, fleshy stalks are perfect for crumbles, jams and chutneys, and harvesting them feels like a real spring treat when little else is ready. It thrives in cool UK climates, dies back in winter, then bursts into growth as the days lengthen. Plant it once, give it a good feed and plenty of space, and you'll enjoy reliable harvests for years to come. Whist Rhubarb is technically a vegetable we tend to put to the same culinary uses as fruits and so that's how we classify it here at Collie Flowers.

Sow the seed February to May indoors, on the surface of a good quality compost, just covering them lightly. Place in cold frame, keeping them moist but not wet until germination. Once seedlings reach about 15cm tall, prick them out, planting them into their final growing spot. This should be somewhere that's partially shady, with well drained soil. Prepare the soil in advance by digging in plenty of well rotted manure and clearing all weeds.

During the first two years, resist the temptation to harvest, in order to allow the plant to become properly established. In spring, remove the emerging flower heads as they appear. From the third year, stems can be harvested from March to June, when the leaves have fully unfurled. Pull from the base of each stem and twist them away from the crown. Harvest only a few stems at a time. Water rhubarb plants in summer during dry periods to prevent the soil from drying out. When the leaves die back in autumn, remove the old stalks and apply a mulch of well rotted manure around the crown. Caution: The leaves of rhubarb plants are toxic if eaten.



Physalis



Cape Gooseberry (*Physalis*) is a tall, vigorous plant that can reach up to 2 metres. A perennial (although we grow it as an annual in the UK), it produces delicate star-shaped flowers through July and August, which are followed by papery husks. As the fruits ripen, those husks turn a striking orange-red, revealing the edible berries inside. The fruits are sweet and tangy; perfect eaten fresh, cooked into jam, or used as a garnish to brighten desserts. Easy to grow and full of character, they bring both beauty and flavour to the garden.

This plant should be treated the same as a tomato and grown in a conservatory, greenhouse or outdoors in a sunny, sheltered position. Plants thrive in freely draining, light, sandy soil and should not be fertilised as this encourages leafy growth at the expense of fruit.

Sow the seed February to May indoors, on the surface of a good quality compost, just covering them lightly. Place in a propagator or cover with plastic until germination. Prick out seedlings into individual pots when they are large enough to handle and grow on, not planting them out until the last expected frosts. After planting provide protection if needed. Pinch out the growing tip before plants are a foot high to encourage bushiness.

Stake plants and water consistently whilst ensuring good drainage. Plants should be ready to harvest by late summer. Fruits are mature when they drop to the ground, they should be left to ripen until golden yellow before eating.



Lovage

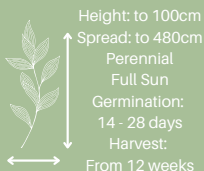
J F M A M J J A S O N D





Lovage grows into a large clump, sending up tall stems, topped with umbels of yellow flowers that attract pollinators. Its deeply divided green leaves resemble celery tops, and the plant dies back in autumn before resprouting each spring. Easy to grow in most soils, it thrives in sun or partial shade and needs little maintenance, making it a reliable addition to herb gardens, borders or veg plots. Perennial, but in colder climates it's best treated as an annual or overwintered in pots.

Sow seed indoors February to April on the surface of good free-draining, seed compost. Cover with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost on the dry side at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into 7.5cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions. Acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out after all risk of frost, 30cm apart. Plant into vegetable borders or containers. Alternatively, direct sow outside from June to September.

In the kitchen, lovage is a forgotten gem. Its leaves, stems, and seeds are all edible, delivering a flavour described as a mix of celery, parsley and anise. Use fresh leaves in soups, stews, and salads, or chop stems into stocks for depth. Seeds can be dried and used as a spice. With its robust taste and versatility, lovage revives old-world flavours and deserves a place in modern cooking as well as the garden.



	Sow inside
	Sow outside
	Plant out
	Harvest
	Flower

Spring Onion



Sow Spring Onion in succession for a continuous crop throughout the year. Many varieties, including those recommended and sold by Collie Flowers are good for overwintering, making a late indoor sowing in September or October for further harvest over the winter and early spring months. Spring onions will grow in most good fertile soil provided it is well drained.

Sow seeds outdoors from March to August at 3 weekly intervals. For a winter and early spring crop sow seeds indoors in September or October and over winter. Whether sowing Spring Onion seed indoors or outdoors, sow liberally 1cm deep in drills 15cm apart. As the seeds are fine, water the drill prior to sowing seeds to prevent them from washing away. If required during dry spells, water as needed.

No thinning is required. However if plants are densely packed, thinnings can be a great addition to salads and stir fries before your main harvest .

Harvesting can usually start 8 weeks after sowing. Use a small fork or trowel to gently lift the plant out of the ground rather than pull and risk snapping it.



Height: to 30cm
Spread: to 5cm
Hardy annual
Full sun
Germination:
7 - 14 days
Harvest:
From 9 weeks

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Perilla

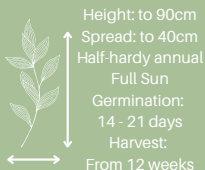
J F M A M J J A S O N D





Perilla is a versatile annual herb, valued for its ornamental foliage and distinctive flavour. Native to Asia and part of the mint family, it thrives in full sun and fertile, well-drained soil, reaching 60–90cm tall. Its erect stems carry crinkled, purplish-red leaves reminiscent of Coleus, which release a strong, cinnamon-like aroma when crushed. Though the genus includes several forms, the annuals are most widely grown in gardens, adding both colour and herbal interest to borders or herb beds.

Sow seed February to April on the surface of good free-draining, seed compost. Cover with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost on the dry side at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into 7.5cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions. Acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out after all risk of frost, 30cm apart. Plant into vegetable borders or containers.

In the kitchen, Perilla is celebrated for its bold, complex flavour. In Japan, red shiso leaves are used to season raw fish, tempura and pickles, and to impart a scarlet hue to pickled plums. In Korea, green perilla leaves are wrapped around rice and grilled meats, or added to stews for fragrance. The taste is often described as a mix of mint, basil, sesame and anise, making it a unique addition to salads, stir-fries and herbal teas. With its dual appeal as a decorative and culinary plant, Perilla bridges garden and kitchen beautifully.



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

Penstemon



Penstemon; these elegant easy-to-grow border plants send up spires of tubular flowers in a range of gorgeous colours. From sky blue to rich plum, deep purple to powdery pink, they flower across the summer months, and like a warm, sunny spot.

Sow Penstemon indoors between February to April. Place seed on the surface of a good free draining, damp, seed compost. Cover with a very fine sprinkling of compost or vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until germination. Do not exclude light, as this helps germination. Germination is slow, but don't lose patience, it is always worth retaining your seed tray through the summer if you've had low rates of germination to see if anything happens and if so you can pot-on and overwinter these plants for use the next year.

Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into pots. Grow on in cooler conditions for 10 to 15 days before planting out after risk of frost, 60cm apart. Water well until plant are established.

Plants will prove hardy if wet winter conditions are avoided.



Height: to 60cm
Spread: to 50cm
Hardy perennial
Full sun
Germination:
1 - 3 months



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Flower

Onion



Although usually grown from sets, onions can be grown from seed, sown either indoors or outside. Seed is cheaper to buy, but slower to grow and the seedlings need more careful attention, however seed-grown plants can be less susceptible to bolting (flowering). To ensure a good crop, seed-raised plants must be growing strongly by late spring, as the lengthening days trigger the formation of bulbs – the more leaves plants have at this time, the better the bulb will be.

Early sowings (December to March) can be made indoors in pots or seed trays, sow seed on the surface of seed sowing compost and lightly cover with a sprinkling or vermiculite or compost and place in a propagator or polythene bag until germination. Indoor sown seedlings can be pricked out into individual pots before moving to a cold frame in April to harden off before planting outside 15cm apart.

Outdoor sowings can be made in April, sow seed thinly in shallow drills 1.5cm deep, with rows spaced 30cm apart. Outdoor sowings can be thinned gradually until plants are 15cm apart, then leave to mature as smaller bulbs for storing. Pull the thinning's carefully and remove from the site to avoid attracting onion fly. Thinning's can be used as salad onions.

Water in prolonged dry spells every 14 days, and give an occasional feed with a general liquid fertiliser. But stop watering and feeding once the onions have swollen in mid-summer. Watering spring-planted crops after mid-summer can mean they store less successfully. Try to avoid overhead watering, as this can encourage fungal diseases.

Yellowing and toppling of the foliage is a sign that the crop is reaching maturity. Harvest before the foliage dies down completely. Carefully lift the bulbs with fork, taking care not to damage or bruise them, as this could cause them to rot in storage. Use any damaged onions straight away.



Height: to 50cm
 Spread: to 10cm
 Hardy annual
 Hardy annual
 Germination:
 14 - 21 days
 Harvest:
 From 12 weeks



- Sow inside
- Sow outside
- Plant out
- Harvest

Linaria







Linaria purpurea, or purple toadflax, is a graceful perennial that naturalises easily and flowers for months. Native to southern Italy but now common across Europe, it grows 60–90cm tall with slender, upright stems and narrow grey-green leaves. From early summer into autumn, it produces dense spires of dainty violet-purple, two-lipped flowers, reminiscent of miniature snapdragons. Loved by bees and butterflies, it's a reliable pollinator plant and makes a charming cut flower. Thriving in full sun and well-drained soil, it suits herbaceous borders, gravel gardens or cottage-style planting.

Sow *Linaria* seed indoors from January to May, or in June and July 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 *Linaria* plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, or in the case of summer sown seeds whilst the ground is still warm, 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.

In autumn, cut back *Linaria* stems after flowering to prevent excessive self-seeding. Remove spent growth, tidy borders, and allow seedlings to establish naturally for fresh displays the following year.



Height: to 90cm
Spread: to 30cm
Hardy Perennial
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
15 - 21 days

-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Flower

Lettuce, Mixed Leaves



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

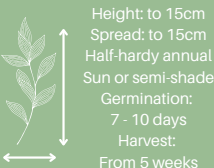
Sow seeds thinly at a depth of 1cm in drills 30cm apart in soil which has been raked to a fine tilth. We recommend watering the drill before sowing the seed as lettuce seed is fine and can easily be washed away with a first heavy watering.

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. Pick the leaves straight from the plants as and when needed and more will grow in their place. Pick leaves by cutting with scissors rather than ripping away from the plant.

Water well in hot weather to guard against bolting.



Lavender



Growing lavender plants from seed can be a rewarding and fun way to add this fragrant herb to your garden. Lavender seeds are slow to germinate and plants grown from them may not flower in the first year, but if you're patient and willing to put in the work, you can generate beautiful plants from seeds.

Sow Lavender seeds from February to June and September to November on the surface of moist seed compost and cover seeds with a sprinkling of vermiculite or finely sieved compost. Place the seed tray in a propagator or seal inside a clear polythene bag until germination. Keep the compost damp but not wet and do not exclude light as this helps germination.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into 7.5cm pots and grow lavender plants on in cooler conditions. When all risk of frost has passed, gradually acclimatise to outdoor conditions over 7 - 10 days before planting outdoors in full sun, in well drained soil.

Your first year of growth will not be impressive, but by year two, expect to have large, blooming lavender. Starting lavender plants from seed is not difficult, but does require time, some patience,



Height: to 90cm
Spread: to 90cm
Half-hardy shrub
Full sun
Germination:
30 - 90 days



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

Gomphrena

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



Gomphrena globosa is a delightful annual flower that adds texture and brilliant colour to garden beds and borders. This hardy plant is a favourite among gardeners looking to create a vibrant and cheery atmosphere because of its round, clover-like blooms that come in a variety of striking colours, including pink, purple, red, and white.

Sow seed indoors January to April 1cm deep in good free-draining, seed compost. Cover with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost on the dry side at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into 7.5cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions. Acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out after all risk of frost, 30cm apart. Once the time comes for an outdoor move, craspedia is perfect for the front to middle of a sunny, well-draining border. It also makes an excellent container plant. Wherever you plant it, remember this plant hails from the mountains of the southern hemisphere, so give it as much sun and drainage as you can!

The long-lasting blooms of *Gomphrena globosa* are well-known for holding their colour even after drying, which makes them ideal for crafts and floral arrangements.



Height: to 100cm

Spread: to 44cm

Annual

Full Sun | well drained

Germination:

14 - 28 days



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Harvest



Flower

Dahlia



The real advantage in growing Dahlias from seed is that you get the best of both worlds. The first year will provide a very economical collection of bright flowers and each plant will produce tubers that can be carefully lifted at the end of the season for storing and re-planting the following year. With single flowers, cactus types, pompons, waterlilly, anemone and collarette types there's a Dahlia out there to suit ever garden and gardener!

Sow Dahlia seed in February and March in trays or pots of good quality seed compost at a depth of 2mm and in a propagator or polythene bag, keeping the compost damp but not wet until germination. Transplant seedlings into 7.5cm pots when large enough to handle taking care not to damage the roots. gradually harden off before planting out in the flowering site from late May onwards. Space plants 60cm apart. Dahlias prefer a moist, well drained soil in full sun. Reducing the amount of flower buds per stem will increase the size and quality of the blooms produced. Deadheading regularly will also promote new blooms and prolong the season.

Whilst Dahlias are a half-hardy perennial, they are largely treated as a half-hardy annual when grown from seed. However, if you have enjoyed the flowers and have a dry frost free place it is always worth trying to lift and store the tubers for replanting the next year. If doing so, check on them regularly for rot, and plant healthy tubers into pots in a greenhouse in April, or plant directly outside once all risk of frost has passed. Tubers should be lifted and stored each year.



Height: to 120cm
 Spread: to 45cm
 Half-hardy annual
 Full sun
 Germination:
 7 - 21 days



- Sow inside
- Sow outside
- Plant out
- Flower

Goji Berry

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

Year 1



Year 2



Year 3



Goji berries are not generally difficult to grow. They tolerate light shade, but when grown in full sun they give their best crop. They are hardy and, once established, will tolerate wind, salt-laden air (such as coastal gardens) and drought.

The seeds are best soaked in cold water for 24 hours before sowing them. Sow them indoors, on a windowsill is best, between January and April. Start them either in modules or 9cm pots, sowing the seeds individually 1cm deep. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost moist, but not wet, at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. If sown in individual modules, your seedlings should be ready to transplant after about 8 week. Transplant into 9cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions, perhaps moving them to a greenhouse or zippy. Continue to care for the seedling, keeping a eye out for roots emerging from the bottom of the pot, this is a sign to move it into a bigger one. Over its first summer the plant will benefit from being outside, but not planted in the ground as once the frosts begin you will need to move the young plant back inside (greenhouse or zippy). In spring of year 2 plant the Goji Berry outside in free-draining soil that has been enriched with well-rotted manure or in a larger container with good drainage holes, and use a good quality potting compost with added grit or sharp sand. Apply a liquid fertiliser (such as tomato feed) fortnightly during the growing season.

Plants begin to fruit in years 2 or 3. Harvest berries from late summer until the first frosts. Only fully ripe fruit are edible. Fruit can turn black when handled so consider harvesting by shaking the berries gently from the plant onto a sheet placed beneath.



Height: to 300cm

Spread: to 400cm

Hardy Perennial

Full Sun

Germination:

14- 21 days

Harvest: from Year 2



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Harvest



Flower

Cleome

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



Cleome is a dramatic summer annual, prized for its spidery blooms and upright habit. Though the genus includes perennials and shrubs, only the annuals are commonly grown in UK gardens, and that's where the Collie Flowers growing guide focuses. Plants reach 1-1.5m, with palmate leaves and spiny stems topped by airy flowerheads in shades of pink, white, purple or rose. Long, slender stamens create the famous 'spider' look, adding height and exotic flair to borders from mid-summer until autumn. While some species, such as *Cleome gynandra*, are grown as leafy vegetables in Africa, the ornamental annuals we grow here are purely decorative and not for eating.

Sow Cleome seed indoors from January 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 Cleome 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.

Cleomes thrive in full sun and well-drained, fertile soil. They like warm weather and tolerate drought once established. Regular deadheading will prolong flowering.



Height: to 120cm
Spread: to 45cm
Tender annual
Full sun
Germination:
7 - 15 days



Sow inside



Sow outside



Plant out



Flower

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 |

Chrysanthemum

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



Chrysanthemums can be annual, hardy perennial or tender perennial, but we focus on the annual variety commonly referred to as “florists’ chrysanthemums” that have been bred from the Chinese and Japanese types to make excellent late season cut flowers. They come in a wonderful range of rich velvety colours, with shapes that vary from the neat pom-pom to outrageous spidery forms.

Sow seed indoors February to April 1cm deep in good free-draining, seed compost. Cover with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost on the dry side at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into 7.5cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions. Acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out after all risk of frost, 30cm apart. Alternatively direct sow your Chrysanthemum seeds outdoors in April or May.

We recommend choosing a sunny, sheltered spot with protection from strong winds and well-drained but fertile soil, that has had some organic matter dug in. Protect the plants from wind by staking each plant with canes. Water regularly throughout the summer and give them a balanced liquid feed every two weeks from midsummer until the buds start to appear. Chrysanthemums are late to flower, so be patient, don’t give them too much nitrogen rich food, a well-balanced feed and lots of sun is what they need.



Height: to 100cm
Spread: to 40cm
Half Hardy Annual
Full Sun | Semi Shade
Germination:
14 - 28 days



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

Craspedia

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



As well as being a favourite among florists, Craspedia is also becoming increasingly well known as a garden plant. It bears dense, yellow, spherical flowerheads, at the top of stiff stems emerging from basal rosettes of narrow foliage. There are several species available, though *Craspedia globosa* is the most widely cultivated. Craspedia is also known by the names of bachelor's buttons or Billy buttons.

Sow seed indoors January to April 1cm deep in good free-draining, seed compost. Cover with a fine sprinkling of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost on the dry side at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into 7.5cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions. Acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out after all risk of frost, 30cm apart. Once the time comes for an outdoor move, craspedia is perfect for the front to middle of a sunny, well-draining border. It also makes an excellent container plant. Wherever you plant it, remember this plant hails from the mountains of the southern hemisphere, so give it as much sun and drainage as you can!

If you intend to treat your craspedia as an annual, there is no pruning required. Simply remove the plant at the end of the growing season and discard onto the compost heap. If you did want to try to overwinter it, simply cut back after flowering and move to a frost-free environment (container-grown) or place a cloche over the plant.



Height: to 100cm



Spread: to 44cm

Perennial

Full Sun | well drained

Germination:

14 - 28 days

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

Chives



Sow seeds indoors in February and March 0.5cm deep, in small pots of compost, lightly covering the seed with a sprinkling of compost. Water well and place at a temperature of 15-20°C. If transplanting outside gradually harden off in a coldframe before planting out 20cm apart once they have been hardened off. Alternatively sow outdoors April to August sowing small clusters of seeds where they are to crop, 0.5cm deep, directly into finely-prepared soil.

Once the leaves reach 15cm tall, begin to harvest, picking a few leaves from each plant so they regrow quickly. Do not cut lower than 5cm above the soil. Once the plants are well established you can harvest all year round. Young plants can be sown and grown on a windowsill all year round, or you could lift and pot up a small clump in the autumn and place on the windowsill for fresh herbs throughout the winter months.

Chives prefer a fertile soil with some moisture but will grow well in dry conditions too, including gravel and rock gardens.



Height: to 30cm
Spread: to 20cm
Perennial
Full sun / semi-shade
Germination:
10 - 21 days
Harvest:
From 10 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Chilli Peppers



Sow Chilli Pepper seeds on the surface of a good, free-draining, damp, seed sowing mix and cover with a fine sprinkling of compost or vermiculite. Place seed trays in a propagator until after germination. Do not exclude light as this helps germination.

When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant into individual 7.5cm pots of compost and grow on in cooler conditions. When plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, transplant into grow bags and containers, or plant in well prepared beds of fertile, moist, well drained soil.

Chilli peppers may be grown undercover in a greenhouse or polytunnel, or grown outdoors in a sheltered position in full sun. When growing chilli peppers outdoors, gradually acclimatise them to outdoor conditions over a period of 7 to 10 days prior to transplanting them. Space pepper plants at a distance of 50cm apart. Taller varieties of chilli peppers may require staking.

Water chilli pepper plants regularly throughout the growing season and feed weekly with a tomato fertiliser once the first fruits have set.



Height: to 75cm
Spread: to 50cm
Half hardy annual
Full sun / greenhouse
Germination:
7 - 10 days
Harvest:
From 13 - 16 weeks



Celeriac



Start seeds off from February, sowing thinly in a small pot or seed tray. Place the pot or tray in a propagator or cover with a clear plastic bag and keep in a warm location. Alternatively, place in a coldframe in milder areas. As celeriac seeds are very fine, sow the seed onto the surface of moist seed sowing compost and lightly cover to its own depth, for the first few weeks water from below or finely mist the surface.

Germination of celeriac is known to be erratic and so it is worth sowing more seeds than you expect to harvest as mature plants. Once seedlings appear, grow on in a frost-free greenhouse or coldframe. Harden off before planting out 30cm apart, once any danger of frost has passed.

Outdoor sowings in April and May, should be made in shallow drills 20cm apart and thinned after germination, before planting out in June.

Celeriac is a moisture-loving plant, so keep the soil constantly damp – it should never be allowed to dry out. Cover the ground with a thick layer of mulch, such as garden compost, to hold in moisture, and keep the area weed free.

As the plants mature, remove the outer leaves when they fall horizontal, to expose the crown and allow it to develop. Remove any side-shoots if they appear.



Brussel Sprouts



Sow Brussels Sprout seed indoors from February in 7.5cm pots or trays of free-draining, sowing compost and cover with a thin layer of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal inside a plastic bag until germination. Once germinated, grow on in cooler conditions until all risk of frost has passed and plants are large enough to be transplanted. They may require potting on prior to being planted out.

Direct sow outdoors from March into a well prepared seedbed, for transplanting to their final positions later on. Sow at a depth of 13mm and distance of 30cm between rows.

Acclimatise to outdoor conditions before planting outdoors, 60cm apart, in firm, rich fertile, well drained soil. Cover with protective netting or fleece to prevent attack from birds and insects.

Flavour is improved once the sprouts have been frosted. Start picking the lowest sprouts first, when they are the size of a walnut, firm and still tightly closed.



Height: to 75cm
Spread: to 40cm
Hardy annual
Full sun
Germination:
5 - 8 days
Harvest:
From 16 weeks



-  Sow inside
-  Sow outside
-  Plant out
-  Harvest

Broad Bean

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

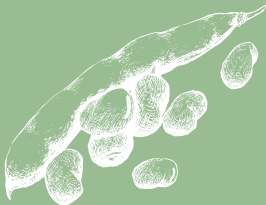
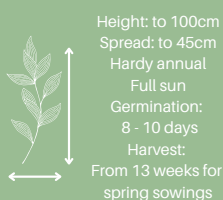


Sown Broad Beans in late winter (indoors or outdoors with the protection of a cloche or similar) or spring (outdoors), although in mild regions they can also be sown in late autumn. Plants grown indoors should be hardened off before planting out.

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.



Bergamot

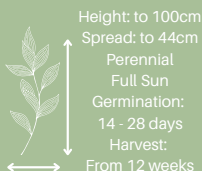
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Bergamot, Bee Balm, even Monarda, this plant is known by many names and comes in many varieties. This growing guide focusses on Wild Bergamot, the herb come wildflower that's easy to grow, beautiful, and highly attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds.

Sow seed indoors October to March on the surface of good free-draining, seed compost. Cover with a fine sprinkling, no more than 5mm of vermiculite. Place in a propagator or seal container inside a polythene bag until after germination. Keep compost on the dry side at all times, water lightly as seedlings emerge. Transplant seedlings when large enough to handle into 7.5cm pots and continue to grow on indoors in cooler conditions. Acclimatise to outside conditions before planting out after all risk of frost, 30cm apart.

This herbaceous perennial wildflower has a long blooming period and can flower anytime from early to mid-summer through to autumn. The flowers are tubular with prominent lips at the opening. They are pale pinkish-purple and grow in rounded clusters atop tall leafy stems. Keep plants thinned so they don't create extremely dense clusters. Thinning will increase plant vigour and health while improving air circulation and helping prevent disease. When plants have died back to the ground at the end of each season, remove any remaining above-ground stems and leafy debris.



Asparagus

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



Asparagus is often grown from crowns, but can also be grown from seed. These plants take one year longer to grow and establish before you can start harvesting.

Sow seeds singly into small individual modules or pots filled with seed compost, in February. Harden them off and transplant into their final positions in early June. Prepare the planting site by weeding thoroughly, then dig in at least one bucketful of organic matter, such as garden compost. Alternatively, sow outside in March or April, in drills 2.5cm deep and 30–45cm apart. Thin the seedlings to 15cm apart and protect from slugs and snails. Transplant them to their final positions the following March.

Keep the asparagus bed weed- free, as asparagus plants grow better without competition from weeds. Weed by hand rather than with a hoe, as the shallow roots are easily damaged. In early spring (years 2, 3 and beyond), apply 100g per sq metre of general fertiliser or blood, fish and bone. If growth is weak, repeat once harvesting has finished. In autumn, allow the foliage to turn yellow before cutting it down to soil level.

Resist the temptation to harvest newly planted asparagus for the first two years, to let plants get well established. In the third year, harvest spears from mid-April for six weeks. In subsequent years, you can harvest for eight weeks from mid-April. To harvest, cut individual spears with a sharp knife 2.5cm below the soil surface when they are no more than 18cm tall. In warm weather, harvest every two to three days for the best quality spears.



Height: to 60cm
Spread: to 45cm
Hardy biennial
Sun or semi-shade
Germination:
21 - 30 days
Harvest:
From 2 years



- Orange square: Sow inside
- Yellow square: Sow outside
- Blue square: Plant out
- Green square: Harvest

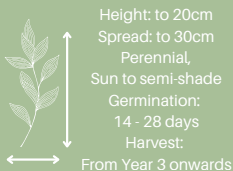
Alpine Strawberry

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



Wild strawberries, also known as Alpine strawberries (*Fragaria vesca*), are a real treat in the garden. These low-growing, spreading perennials produce small, jewel-like red fruits from spring right through to autumn. They're perfect for tucking into informal corners, whether that's cracks in paving, stone walls, or edging beds, and they'll happily make themselves at home. Be aware they can spread, but that's part of their charm if you've got space to fill. Native across much of the Northern Hemisphere, they're prized for their intense flavour, often said to be sweeter than cultivated strawberries. If you're keen on fruit production, look out for named varieties, like Mignonette which we stock, bred to give slightly larger berries. What they lack in size, they more than make up for in taste and character.

Sow strawberry seeds from January to April on the surface of a good quality seed compost. Do not cover the seed. Keep the soil moist but not wet and do not exclude light as this helps germination. 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 strawberry plants are well grown and all risk of frost has passed, acclimatise them to outdoor conditions before planting outdoors in their final positions. Grow strawberries in full sun in fertile, moist, well drained soil at a distance of 30cm apart.



	Sow inside
	Sow outside
	Plant out
	Harvest

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

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

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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

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



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