

School Garden Planting Guide

Key to Planting Guide Headings

Crops – This guide provides detailed information about crops commonly planted by seed in school gardens. We encourage you to experiment with additional plants that grow well in your area. Check with local gardeners, your Extension Office and garden center employees for suggestions.

Plant Seed Indoors – Many seeds can be started indoors and then transplanted to outdoor gardens. This column provides you with the weeks to plant your seeds indoors relative to your first or last frost date. You can find this date by contacting your local Extension Office.

Plant Outdoors – Some seeds can be planted indoor or outdoors. Additionally, some seeds will not transplant well and should only be sown directly into outdoor gardens. This column provides you with the weeks to plant your seeds in outdoor gardens and also the approximate time to plant seedlings started indoors into outdoor gardens relative to your first or last frost date. You can find this date by contacting your local Extension Office.

Planting Depth - Generally you should plant seeds at a depth two to three times their width. This column of the guide lists specific planting depths in inches. Some of the crops listed either require light to germinate or are too tiny to be buried under soil. A “0” appearing in this column indicates that the seeds should be planted on top of the soil and pressed down lightly with a smooth surface, but not buried.

Spacing – Plants should be grown a certain distance apart to insure they do not crowd each other and inhibit healthy growth. This column includes the recommended spacing for mature plants in inches. Since not all seeds will germinate, you will plant seeds closer than the distance needed by mature plants. Follow the recommended spacing stated on the seed packet when planting seeds outdoors. If more seeds germinate than expected, you may need to thin your crop.

Days to Germination - This column will give you an approximate idea of when to expect your seeds to sprout given reasonable conditions. Temperature and moisture can greatly affect this rate.

Days to Harvest - This column will give you an approximate idea of when your plants will be ready to harvest. Temperature, water, and a number of other environmental factors can affect this rate.

Nutrients Contained – This column includes information on vitamins and minerals provided in substantial amounts for fruit and vegetable plants.

Spring Vegetable and Fruit Planting Guide (*Not recommended)

Crop	Plant Seed Indoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Plant Seed or Transplants Outdoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Planting Depth (inches)	Spacing of Plants (inches)	Days to Germination	Days to Harvest	Good Source Of:
Beans	3-4 weeks before	1-2 weeks after	1	6-8	4-10	60-80	Vit. C, fiber
Beets	*	2-4 weeks before	-	2-4	7-10	50-75	Greens high in A, C, Iron, Ca
Broccoli	5-8 weeks before	5-8 weeks before	-	15-18	5-10	60-75	Vit. A, C, folate, Ca, Mg, fiber
Cabbage	4-6 weeks before	5 weeks before	-	18	4-10	50-75	Vit. C, fiber
Carrots	*	2-4 weeks before	1/4	2	10-17	45-75	Vit. A, fiber
Cauliflower	5-8 weeks before	1-2 weeks before	-	15-18	5-10	60-72	Vit. C, folate, K
Celery	8-10 weeks before	2-3 weeks before	-	6	7-12	60-75	fiber
Corn	3-4 weeks before	1-2 weeks after	1	12-15	3-10	50-95	thiamine folate, K
Cucumbers	2-3 weeks before	1-2 weeks after	1	12-24	3-8	60-80	-
Garlic	*	6 weeks before	-	4-6		180-200	Vit. A, C, folate
Lettuce	3-4 weeks before	2-4 weeks before through 3 weeks after	-	10-12	2-10	55-70	Vit. A, K, Ca
Onions	*	3 weeks before through 2 weeks after	-	4	4-12	60-85	Vit. C
Peas	4-6 weeks before	4-6 weeks before through 2-3 weeks after	1	4	6-15	55-75	Protein, B1
Peppers	6-8 weeks before	1-3 weeks after	1/2	10-12	8-20	65-85	Vit. C
Potatoes	*	4-6 weeks before	6	10-12	10-15	60-80	Vit. C, B6 niacin, Cu, K, fiber
Pumpkin	*	After last frost chance	1	36	7-10	50-90	-
Radishes	*	4-6 weeks before	-	1	3-10	45-75	-
Spinach	3-4 weeks before	3-6 weeks before	-	4-8	6-14	40-75	Vit. A, C, K, Iron
Squash, Summer	*	1-4 weeks after	1	15-24	3-12	60-85	Vit. A, C, fiber
Squash, Winter	*	2 weeks after	-1	24-36	4-10	60-85	Vit. A, C, K, fiber
Tomatoes	6-8 weeks before	2-4 weeks after	-1/2	18-24	6-14	65-85	Vit. A, C, K, fiber
Cantaloupe	2 weeks before	2 weeks after	1	6-8	7-14	60-90	Vit. A, C, thiamine, K
Strawberries (Alpine)	3-5 weeks before	*	1/8	6-8	20	85+	Vit. C, fiber
Watermelon	2 weeks before	2 weeks after	-	4	5-10	70-90	Vit. A, B6, C, thiamine,

Spring Herb Planting Guide

Crop	Plant Seed Indoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Plant Seed or Transplants Indoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Planting Depth (inches)	Spacing (inches)	Days to Germination	Days to Harvest	Edible?
Basil	4-6 weeks before	1 to 2 weeks after	1/8	6-12	7-10		
Catnip	6 weeks before	2 to 4 weeks before	1/8	12-18	5-14		
Chives	6 weeks before	After last chance of frost	1/4	12	12	5-14	
Cilantro	*	After last chance of frost	1/4	12-18	12-18	10-15	
Dill	*	1 to 2 weeks before	1/4	3-12	3-12	20-25	
Oregano	6-8 weeks before	2 to 4 weeks after	1/8	8-12	8-12	8-14	
Parsley	4-6 weeks before	1-2 weeks after	-	6	6	11-27	
Sage	4 weeks before	After last chance of frost	-	12	12	14-21	
Spearmint	6 weeks before	After last frost chance	1/8	18	18	10-16	
Thyme	8 weeks before	2 weeks after	1/8	6-12	6-12	20-30	

*Not Recommended

Herbs may be harvested at any time once they reach a decent size as long as you leave enough foliage to keep the plant alive.

Spring Flower Planting Guide

Crop	Plant Seed Indoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Plant Seed or Transplants Outdoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Planting Depth (inches)	Spacing (inches)	Days to Germination	Days to Harvest	Edible?
Bachelor's Buttons	4-5 weeks before	1 to 2 weeks before	1/4	12-14	7-14	50-60	Yes, petals
Borage	*	After chance of frost	-1/2	12	5-10	45-50	Yes
Calendula	6-8 weeks before	After chance of frost	-1/2	10-12	5-15	40-50	Yes
Cosmos	4 weeks before	After chance of frost	1/4	8-24	5-7	90-100	No
Hollyhocks	6-8 weeks before	Early summer	0 (press into soil)	24	10	120-150	Yes
Love in a Mist	4-6 weeks before	2 to 4 weeks before	1/8	6-12	10-15	60	Yes
Marigolds	4-6 weeks before	1-2 weeks after	1/8	10-12	5-10	70-80	Yes
Nasturtiums	*	After last frost	1/2	6-12	7-14	40-60	Yes
Sunflowers	3-4 weeks before	2 weeks before	1-2	12-24	7-14	80-120	Yes, seeds
Tithonia	6-8 weeks before	After chance of frost	0 (press into soil)	24	10-15	75-105	No
Zinnias	6 weeks before	1-2 weeks after	1/8	6-12	5 to 10	70	No

*Not recommended

Fall Vegetable and Fruit Planting Guide

Crop	Plant Seed Outdoors (weeks before or after last frost)	Planting Depth (inches)	Spacing (inches)	Days to Germination	Days to Harvest	Good Source Of:
Beets	8-10 weeks before	-	2-4	7-10	50-75	Greens high in A, C, Iron, Ca
Broccoli	14-17 weeks before	-	15-18	5-10	60-75	Vit. A, C, folate, Ca, Mg, fiber
Cabbage	13-14 weeks before	-	18	4-10	50-75	Vit. C, fiber
Carrots	13 weeks before	1/4	2	10-17	45-75	Vit. A, fiber
Cauliflower	14 weeks before	-	15-18	5-10	60-72	Vit. C, folate, K
Garlic	Sept.-Nov. w/ mulch	-	4-6		180-200	Vit. A, C, folate
Lettuce	6-8 weeks before	-	10-12	2-10	55-70	Vit. A, K, Ca
Onions	Depends on variety	-	4	4-12	60-120	Vit. C
Peas	12 weeks before	1	4	6-15	55-75	Protein, B1
Radishes	7 weeks before	-	1	3-10	45-75	-
Spinach	6-8 weeks before	-	4-8	6-14	40-75	Vit. A, C, K, Iron
Strawberries (Alpine)	5-8 weeks before last frost	1/8	4	20	Next spring	Vit. C, fiber

Planting Guides adapted from: The Growing Classroom. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1990.
Jaffe, Roberta and Gary Appel.

Pranis, Eve and Jack Hale. Grow Lab: A Complete Guide to Gardening in the Classroom. South Burlington, VT: National Gardening Association, 1988.

NC State Herb Fact Sheets: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/herbs/herbindex.html>

NC State Annual Fact Sheets: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/annuals/annual_index.html

Online Vegetable /Flower Growing and Harvest Guides

<http://www.organicgardening.com> learn organic gardening tips, sign up for monthly garden reports for your area.

<http://www.garden.org/regional/report> get gardening information for your region, sign up for bi monthly reminders

<http://www.burpee.com> great information on gardening and seed catalog

<http://www.garden.org/foodguide/browse> information on planting and harvesting

<http://www.territorial-seed.com> great catalog and information on particular crops.

www.ucsc.edu/casfs - Downloadable "For the Gardener" organic gardening tip sheets found in the community outreach section.