

Grow Your Own To-Do List

March

- Sow beetroots, Brussel sprouts, summer cabbages, leeks, lettuces, hardy peas and radishes outdoors or under cloches.
- Plant early potatoes such as International Kidney.
- Prune peach trees between now and early April.
- Mulch raspberry canes with compost or manure.
- Start regular hoeing, to keep annual weeds under control.

April

- Strawberries can be planted out now – choose several different varieties to spread the harvest season from June until late summer.
- Support pea plants with sticks, twigs, green support mesh, or wire netting.
- Sow carrots, Swiss chard, summer cauliflower, kohlrabi, lettuce, leeks, radish, turnip, spring and pickling onions, peas and perpetual spinach in well-prepared soil.
- Sow the seeds of cucurbits (courgettes, pumpkins and other members of the gourd family) under glass for planting out in June.

May

- Enjoy a continual supply of herbs such as basil, coriander and parsley by sowing a little of each seed every few weeks.
- Finish planting maincrop potatoes and, if early potatoes are through, protect them by earthing up the soil around the crowns.
- Mulch around strawberries to prevent the fruit being spoiled, using straw or black polythene.
- Try sowing some unusual vegetables such as salsify, Hamburg parsley, or scorzonera, both root vegetables favoured by the Victorians, and still eaten a lot on the Continent.

Notes

June

- Spread nets over soft fruit bushes and check fruit cages for tears or damage.
- Harvest salad onions, salad leaves, beetroot and radishes as they mature.
- Plant out other vegetables such as sweet peppers sown indoors earlier in the season.
- Stretch strings along the sides of broad bean plants to support them and prevent flopping once pods develop.

July

- Ensure all vegetables get a regular, consistent supply of water, using harvested rainwater wherever possible.
- Plant out leeks and brassicas for a winter supply.
- Harvest herbs regularly and dry for winter use.
- Harvest garlic and shallots and sow winter radishes.

August

- When strawberries have finished fruiting, cut leaves well back and compost.
- Harvest apples, plums and other fruit and choose a suitable way of storing – freezing, cooking or preserving.
- Harvest aubergines, courgettes, French beans, potatoes, sweet corn and turnips.
- Sow spring cabbage and overwintering onions.



Notes

September

- Sow autumn salads.
- Protect outdoor tomatoes with cloches and straw.
- Harvest marrows, pumpkins and squashes and leave in the sun to let the skins harden and dry off before storing in a cool, dry, dark place.
- Harvest pears just before they are fully ripe to prevent going brown in the centre.

October

- Plant spring cabbage and cut back asparagus.
- Plant garlic and Japanese onion sets.
- Trim parsley to encourage fresh shoots.
- Protect fruit trees from winter pests using grease bands.

November

- Plant bare root fruit trees and bushes.
- Leave leeks and parsnips in the ground until required for use.
- Prune apples, pears, blackcurrants, gooseberries and raspberries.
- Pot up a selection of herbs for the windowsill to keep a fresh supply at hand.

December

- Plan for next year by ordering catalogues and seeds.
- Dig over vacant areas and incorporate soil improvers.
- Stake or earth up Brussel sprouts stalks that look leggy and vulnerable to wind rock.
- Keep a check on stored fruit and vegetables and discard anything rotten.

Notes