

## Creating a Seasonal Garden Plan

Designing and planning a garden space is essential. When it comes to making decisions about what you will grow, it will help to know which features a garden can accommodate. This guide will discuss what you need to consider when planning your garden, including how to build a seasonal garden plan.

Things to put in place at the start of your project, include:

- Essential structures (tool storage, shelter);
- Water butts;
- Greenhouse/polytunnel;
- Compost bins;
- Planters;
- Growing beds;
- Footpaths.

### Choosing suitable locations

Make sure to choose suitable locations for your features. For example, compost bins, greenhouses and polytunnels will all need some heat from sunlight, and tool storage is best situated away from public view, if possible.

Ensure you have enough space for each feature; it is essential to fit guttering and water butts to all your structures so that you can harvest rainwater for watering your plants. Create a layout on paper or digitally before you get started.

### Accessibility

Raised planters should be accessible. Consider wheelchair users or people who need space to work. Footpaths need to be wide enough for wheelbarrows or wheelchair users, as well as made from suitable materials.

### Building your growing plan

Depending on the type of garden, you will need to decide on what food you want to grow; this may include flowering plants, trees, etc. Put a growing plan in place so that you know when:

- Seeds need to be sown;
- Seedlings need to be planted;
- Produce needs to be harvested;
- Cuttings need to be taken;
- Plants/trees need to be pruned.

The internet is a great place to find growing plans; make sure to choose one that relates to the UK and always follow the current weather for your area.

### Planning for the seasons

Your garden will have different requirements throughout the year. Below are a few seasonal considerations when creating your growing plan.

#### Spring

Spring is growing season and the busiest time in a gardener's calendar! This is when you need to sow lots of seeds, either directly into the ground or into pots and trays. Potting on young seedlings and

eventually planting them out in their final position. If you haven't got a greenhouse set up yet to start off seeds, then you can use windowsills at home.

Weeding is important, as spring is also the time that weeds start to emerge, and any grassed areas will need to be mowed. It is also the time when you need to look out for late frosts and protect young plants if required.

### **Summer**

Water, water, water, is the key message for the summer! Water early morning if possible, and always water the ground and not the foliage, or you will scorch your plants. It is important to make sure that your plants are watered regularly during hot, dry weather. You will want to have a watering plan in place even if the garden is not open to regular volunteers or the public.

### **Autumn**

The time to harvest fruit and vegetables. Autumn is a good time to mulch your growing beds once they have been cleared and top up your planters with compost that you have made from your waste material.

If you have trees on-site, then collect leaves and make a leaf compost, which can be used for mulching beds in future years.

Autumn also offers a great time to celebrate your achievements and your volunteers.

### **Winter**

This is the season to focus on any maintenance jobs and to continue building any structures that you have planned for.

It is also the season to start planning what you want to grow in the following year – ordering seeds, potting compost and acquiring any other materials you might need.