

## Seed Sowing



### What do we need to start?

- Packet of seeds - try lettuce, beans, sweet peas, sunflowers, tomatoes - all quite easy to grow
- Pots/trays with drainage holes
- Compost or mixture of soil and compost
- Polythene bags to cover pots/trays
- Hand Trowel
- Labels and Pen/pencil
- Work area and newspaper to prevent a mess
- Time - 30 to 60 minutes

1. Seeds will not germinate and can die if conditions are too cold and wet. When sowing early in the season (February/March), use a warm room or heated greenhouse that has plenty of light and good ventilation; the windowsill is also a good place. The seeds will germinate and produce strong, healthy plants that can be planted into the garden at a later date when the weather improves.

2. Fill a pot or seed tray with moist (not wet) compost or a mixture of soil and compost. Level and firm the surface to approx. 2cm from the top before you sow the seeds.

3. Sow seeds thinly over the surface of the compost. Most seeds need a small covering of compost over them - see what the seed packet instructions say.

4. Stand the pot or tray in water until the compost surface becomes moist. Drain well and label each pot/tray with the name of the seeds and the date. Cover each pot/tray with a polythene bag to prevent the compost from drying out. Remove the polythene cover when the seeds begin to germinate after 10 to 20 days depending on the conditions and the type of seed.

5. When the seedlings are strong enough, they can be transplanted (pricking-out) into larger trays/pots about 5cm apart (one seedling per small pot). Seedling plants are very delicate and must be handled with care. Hold them by the leaf and tease individual seedlings apart with a pencil or pen. Make a small hole and place the plant into it so the root is covered. The seedlings can be grown-on and then planted into their final growing pots or outside into the garden when big enough. Before putting young plants outside in the Spring, they will need a period of time to become acclimatised (hardened-off). Young plants need protection from the frost and cold wet weather. A small packet of seeds will produce a lot of plants for your garden.

## ALWAYS LABEL SEEDS

