

How to Garden Organically: For Beginners

What is organic gardening?

No use of fertilizers or pesticides. Minimize and continually replenishing resources.

Planning:

How to Compost

1. Measure a space at least 3 ft²
2. Alternate layers of carbon (brown) material – leaves and garden trimmings – and nitrogen (green) material – kitchen scraps and manure) with a thin layer of soil in between.
3. Top the pile with 4-6" of soil. Turn the pile as new layers are added. Add water to keep barely moist.

Location: Want at least 5 hours of sunlight a day minimum

7 hrs is better, 11 hrs is best!

Level ground that is easily drained

Soil: Add good soil and organic material

Top soil + dairy cow manure + compost

Consider testing for lead in soil if near house

Seeds: Purchase high quality certified organic seeds

What to grow: Start with plants that are easy to grow:

Tomatoes, pea shoots, lettuce, mint, onions, strawberries

Beds: Raised beds preferable – if too complicated, mound soil into hilled rows (a foot higher than ground)

Planting: Dig a hole just as deep and at least 2x as wide as the root ball of your plant. Give plenty of water right after planting.

Mulch: Add 3" thick organic mulch atop of garden. Helps prevent weeds and retain soil moisture.

Planting:

Planting too early: W/ weather is unpredictable. In general, Memorial Day weekend is a good time to get heat loving species (basil, melons, cucumbers) planted. Keep your eyes peeled for frost and be prepared to cover, protect your plants.

Peas, radishes, lettuce, and spinach do well in cooler weather

Crowding your garden: Plants need their own space and nutrients to grow.

Weeds and pests: Marigolds may help to naturally repel rabbits and other pests.

Avoiding mistakes:

Advice from Deep Roots Community Farm:

- Small seedlings are better than big ones – they experience less transplant shock and will take off quickly in your garden.
- Dig compost into your garden! Especially in clay or sandy soil.
- Pollinators are crucial! Attract them with flowering species like calendula, cosmos, borage, zinnias, sunflowers, etc.
- Plant successions of beets, lettuce, radishes, carrots, cucumbers, etc. every week. If one fails you'll still get a crop!



GR^{OW} LA CROSSE

What to plant when:

April

Beets: April 15-August 15
Broccoli: April 15 - August 1
Brussels sprouts: April 15 - May 15
Cabbage: April 15 - July 1
Cauliflower: Mid April - Mid May
Carrots: April 15 - early June

Kale: Mid April - Mid May
Onions: April 15 - May 10
Peas: April 15
Potatoes: April 15 - July 10
Radish: Mid April - August

May

Beets: April 15-August 15
Broccoli: April 15 - August 1
Beans: May 10-July 15
Brussels sprouts: April 15 - May 15
Cabbage: April 15 - July 1
Cauliflower: Mid April - Mid May
Carrots: April 15 - early June

Kale: Mid April - Mid May
Melons: May 20 - July 1
Onions: April 15 - May 10
Peppers: May 20 - July 1
Potatoes: April 15 - July 10
Radish: Mid April - August
Tomato: May 20 - July 1

June

Beets: April 15-August 15
Broccoli: April 15 - August 1
Beans: May 10-July 15
Cabbage: April 15 - July 1
Carrots: April 15 - early June
Cucumber: June 1 - July 1

Melons: May 20 - July 1
Peppers: May 20 - July 1
Potatoes: April 15 - July 10
Radish: Mid April - August
Tomato: May 20 - July 1

July

Beets: April 15-August 15
Broccoli: April 15 - August 1
Beans: May 10-July 15
Potatoes: April 15 - July 10



August

Beets: April 15-August 15
Radish: Mid April - August