

JUMP START the GARDEN SEASON

and Boost Your Nutrition



Plant one or more containers of cool season vegetables like peas, greens, radishes and beets in early spring. Start them from seed indoors and move them outside when the weather conditions are right. Or if you have no outdoor garden space continue to grow them in a sunny window or under artificial lights indoors.

Share your project with others on social media using #APSustainableGardening

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Containers with drainage holes
- Well-drained potting mix
- Saucer and mat to protect furniture and woodwork
- Seeds
- Sunny window or artificial lights



GROWING GREENS

Health benefits: Low in calories and high in a variety of vitamins and minerals, fiber and antioxidants.

Leaf Lettuce, Spinach, Arugula, Chard, Kale, Mustard and other edible greens

- Select the right size container for the seeds and available space
 - 1 to 3 gallon pot, 6 to 8" deep, can be smaller for smaller varieties
 - Long, shallow (planter box style) for a more horizontal growing space
- Fill the container with potting mix
 - Place on a saucer to prevent damage to furniture or woodwork
- Sprinkle the seeds on the soil surface
- Lightly stir the seeds into the soil surface or lightly cover the seeds with potting mix
- Water thoroughly
- Water often enough to keep the soil surface moist
 - Cover the container with plastic or dome to reduce watering frequency
 - Remove as soon as seeds sprout
- Move the container to a sunny window or under artificial lights as soon as the seeds sprout
- Water thoroughly and as needed
 - Pour off excess water
 - Or, use a gravel tray
 - Place a layer of pebbles in the saucer
 - Set the pot on the pebbles above the water level
- Thin the planting
 - When seedlings have 2 sets of true leaves (ones that look like the parent plant)
 - Leave a couple inches between each plant
 - Use the greens removed to garnish a salad or eat them plain
- Start harvesting the outer leaves when 3 to 6" tall
- Regular harvesting will keep your greens producing new leaves
 - Or, harvest all the leaves at once and create one big salad

GROWING RADISHES, BEETS AND CARROTS

Health benefits: Low in calories, provide a variety of vitamins and minerals, many are high in antioxidants and can add color and crunch to your meals.

- Select short carrots and quick maturing and small varieties
- Select the right size container with drainage holes
 - Best in 2+ quart pot
 - Deep enough to accommodate the roots
 - ✦ Radishes - 4 to 6" deep
 - ✦ Carrots - 10"+ deep (depends on variety)
 - ✦ Beets - 8" deep
- Repeat the same process as for greens

GROWING SUGAR SNAP PEAS

Health benefits: High in Vitamin C and Vitamin K and Iron

- Select shorter varieties, like Patio Pride, Sugar Ann, Snak Hero and Tom Thumb
 - Plant seeds 1" deep
 - ✦ 2 seeds in each individual 3" or larger pots
 - ✦ Or, several seeds 2" apart in a long, rectangular container
- Water thoroughly
- Water often enough to keep the soil surface moist
 - Cover container with plastic or dome to reduce watering frequency
 - Remove as soon as seeds sprout
- Move the container to a sunny window (8 to 10 hours of bright light) or under artificial lights as soon as the seeds sprout
- Water thoroughly and as needed
 - Pour off excess water
 - Or, use a gravel tray
 - ✦ Place a layer of pebbles in the saucer
 - ✦ Set the pot on the pebbles about the water level

- Thin plantings when seedlings have 2 sets of true leaves (about 2" tall)
 - Leave 1 plant per small pot and 4" between seedlings in larger container
 - Use a scissors to remove extra seedlings at ground level and use them in salads, sandwiches and stir fries
- Peas are self-fertile, so no bees or shaking needed for pods to form
- Harvest pods when they reach the size you prefer

IF MOVING THE CONTAINERS OUTDOORS

- Prepare the plants for the outdoors (harden off)
 - Move plants to a sheltered and shaded location temporarily on mild days, with frost protection or permanently after the danger of frost has passed
 - Cover plants or move them indoors when frost is in the forecast
 - Place plants in a location where they receive an hour of sunlight the first day
 - Increase the amount of light the plants receive by an hour each day until they reach their final location
- All vegetables produce best in full sun
 - Greens are the most shade tolerant
 - ✦ 2 to 4 hours of sunlight or bright indirect light all day
 - Carrots, beets and other root crops
 - ✦ 4 or 6 hours of sunlight
 - Peas and other vegetables you eat the fruit of
 - ✦ 8 hours or more

Have fun growing some edible plants indoors. Try various vegetables and take notes on your successes, those you want to grow again and new varieties to try in the future.

