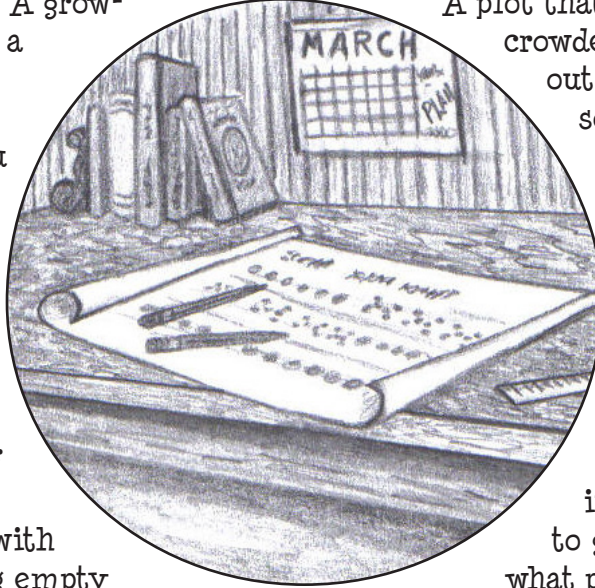


PLANNING

THE SCOOP:

Before you put any seed into the ground, you are going to want to make sure that you have a good growing plan for your garden. A growing plan is your blueprint for a successful garden season. A growing plan will make you mindful of the space that you have to work with while also keeping you on top of your plantings and harvests; two things that can sometimes get overlooked.

All too often, beginning gardeners can be so unsure of themselves that they can either under plant and end up with underutilized plots full of big empty spaces or they can over plant and lose everything in an overcrowded mess. Either way, you



end up somewhere where you don't want to be. A growing plan will help you find a healthy balance. A plot that is full and productive but not so crowded that your plants choke each other out and sap the nutrients from your soil.

There is no "right" way to plant your garden plot, but there are some useful tips to keep in mind. What do I want to grow this season? How many plantings do you want to do in a season? Do you want to garden in just the summer months or do you want to grow into the fall? What plants do I want to grow that need time and space and what plants grow quickly? What are the cool weather crops that I need to plant early in spring? What plants are too big for my space? And so on.

LARGE PLANTS V. SMALL PLANTS

Large plants take a while to mature. Make sure that you plant them in a space where they get plenty of sun throughout the growing season. Also, remember, that the tiny seed or transplant that you plant is not going to stay that way forever. Make sure that all of your large plants are spaced at least 18" apart from any of your other plantings.

Smaller plants can mature quickly. Be sure to keep them thinned and well-spaced. You don't want plants that are too bunched up to grow. Think about putting at least 4"-6" between your small plants and your other plantings. Think about a good spacing as about the distance between your forefinger and your pinky finger

LARGE PLANTS

(A foot or taller, sprawling or vining)

- Tomatoes
- Pole Beans
- Squash
- Peas
- Peppers
- Cucumbers
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Brussels Sprouts
- Eggplant
- Melons

SMALLER PLANTS

(Shorter than a foot, not sprawling or vining)

- Lettuce
- Bush Beans
- Radishes
- Beets
- Turnips
- Carrots
- Onions
- Spinach
- Swiss Chard
- Greens

COMPANION PLANTING

Many of the plants in our gardens have working relationships with one another. Some plants add valuable nutrients to the soil that other plants can use. Others put off scents that deter bugs and pests and some can even help with pollination. When we put plants together that benefit one another, we call this Companion planting.

One of the best examples of companion planting is the Three Sisters; beans, corn and squash. The corn grows quickly and allows a stalk for the beans to climb. In return the beans put nitrogen into the soil that the corn and squash need to grow. Finally, as the squash vines begin to branch out they help to keep weeds down and maintain moisture levels in the soil. Incredible right?

Here are some examples of companion plantings that can work for a small-plot garden

GOOD COMPANIONS

Beans & Carrots, Corn, Radishes, Peas and Lettuce

Beets & Cabbage and Onions

Cabbage & Beets, Onions and Tomatoes

Carrots & Beans, Lettuce, Pease, Radishes and Tomatoes

Cucumbers & Beans, Lettuce, Onions and Radishes

Lettuce & Carrots, Cucumbers, Radishes and Strawberries

Melons & Radishes

Onions & Beets, Carrots, Cucumbers, Peppers, Tomatoes and Squash

Peas & Beans, Carrots, Radishes and Turnips

Peppers & Onions

Radishes & Beans, Carrots, Melons and Lettuce

Spiniach & Onions and Radishes

Herbs & Cabbage, Peppers and Tomatoes

Strawberries & Beans, Lettuce, Onions and Spinach

Tomatoes & Cabbage, Carrots and Spinach

Zucchini & Onions and Radishes

BAD COMPANIONS

Of course, there are some planting combinations that do not work well together too. Pairing these vegetables together will hamper growth and hurt your crop.

Beans & Onions

Cabbage & Strawberries

Cucumbers & Herbs

Onions & Beans and Peas

SUCCESSION PLANTING

Succession planting allows you harvest continually throughout the growing season without getting overwhelmed. Instead of planting everything all at one time, you space your plantings over a couple of weeks so that by the time your first harvest is ready, you still have plants growing to harvest later.

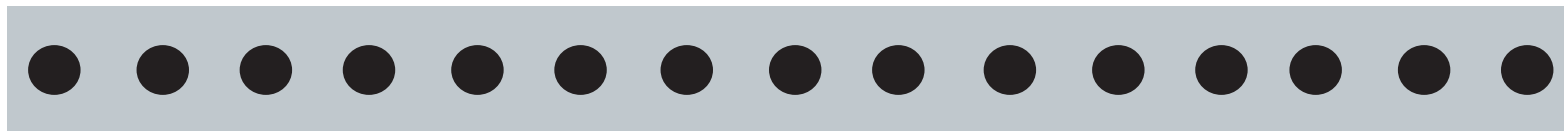
For example, I decide to plant so spinach but instead of planting all of my spinach at one I space it over a three week period. That way, I know that when it's time to harvest the spinach from week 1, the spinach from week 2 will be a week away from being ready and the spinach from week 3 will be two weeks away from being ready. That way I don't have to worry about a huge harvest all at once that I can't handle.

Succession planting also means that as soon as something is harvested, I planting something in that empty space. That way I can keep my continuous harvest going all season long.

PLANTING STYLES

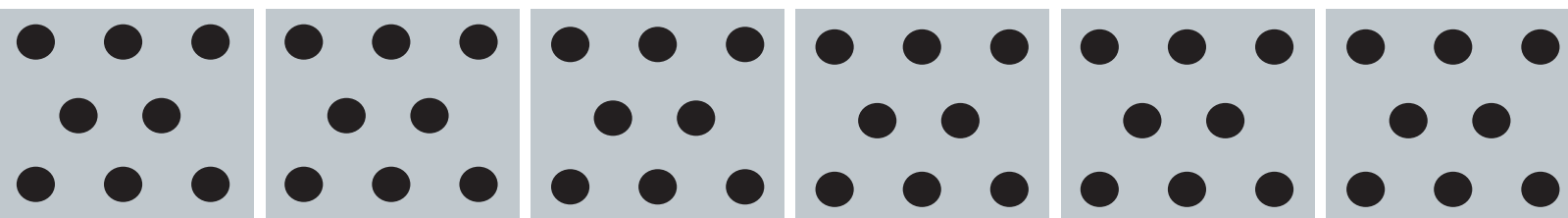
Some people like rows, while some people prefer to space their plants in blocks. Pick a style that works best for you and your plants.

Rows (Easy)



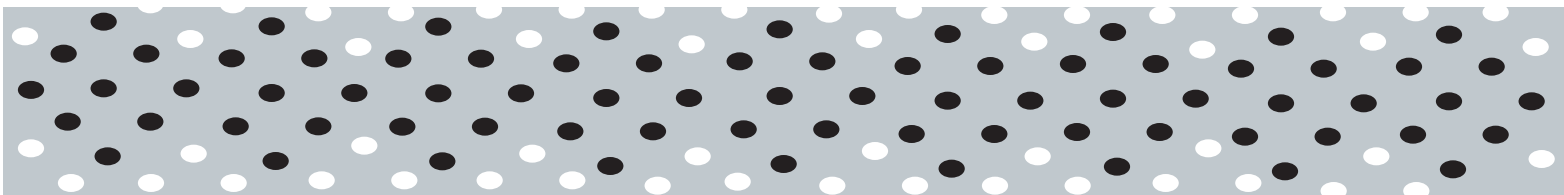
Planting in rows is the simplest and most straight forward way for new gardeners to get their toes wet. To plan in a row, mark out a space the runs either the length or width of your bed. Use your fingers or a garden trowel to dig in a trench in your space. Drop your seeds into the trench at even intervals. Finally, cover the space back with soil. Planting in rows works especially well for root crops and leafy greens.

Square Foot Method (Intermediate)



When you plant by square feet, you divide your bed into square foot sections and plant each section with a vegetable. So for instance, if you were planting carrots, you would mark out your square foot and even plant carrot seeds throughout that space.

Diamond (Advanced)



Diamond Planting is a more dynamic planting that incorporates elements from both the row technique and the square foot method. When Planting in diamonds, we section our bed into even rows and then mark out even diamonds within each row. When fully, planted, your diamonds from each row should line up with one another and your rows will begin to blend into one another, so that in the end, you have a crowded but well-spaced and fully planted bed.

A GARDEN PLAN FOR BEGINNERS

Decide What You Want

As a beginning gardener I know that I am going to want to start out nice and easy in the spring, develop my skills in the summer and get an understanding of what it means to garden in the fall. I want a garden that is low maintenance, easy to care for and which has a little bit of wiggle room for mistakes and experimentation.

I've picked a list of things I want to grow and organized them into the seasons where they are most successful:

Spring

- Lettuce
- Radishes
- Beets
- Turnips
- Carrots
- Spinach
- Swiss Chard

Summer

- Tomatoes
- Summer Squash
- Zucchini
- Peppers
- Bush Beans
- Cucumbers
- Herbs

Fall

- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Winter Squash

Spring

I know that I can plant all of my spring crops early in the Spring, in mid-April or after the last frost and that most of them are harvestable within 4-6 weeks. I can plant about half of my bed in with my Spring Crops in simple rows.

I can start most of my Summer Crops (tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers) as transplants indoors the same time that I plant my Spring Crops Outside. That way, I can start to move them into my plot as soon as I start to harvest my Spring Crops.

Most of my Spring Crops will also work well through the summer so I plan to succession plant my lettuce and spinach too.

Summer

Around Mid May, I also plan to plant some of my Summer Crops (zucchini, summer squash and beans) as seeds directly into the empty spaces I left in my bed.

In late May or early June, once I've planted my transplants, I'll also sow my herbs in and around them because they make good companion plants.

Fall

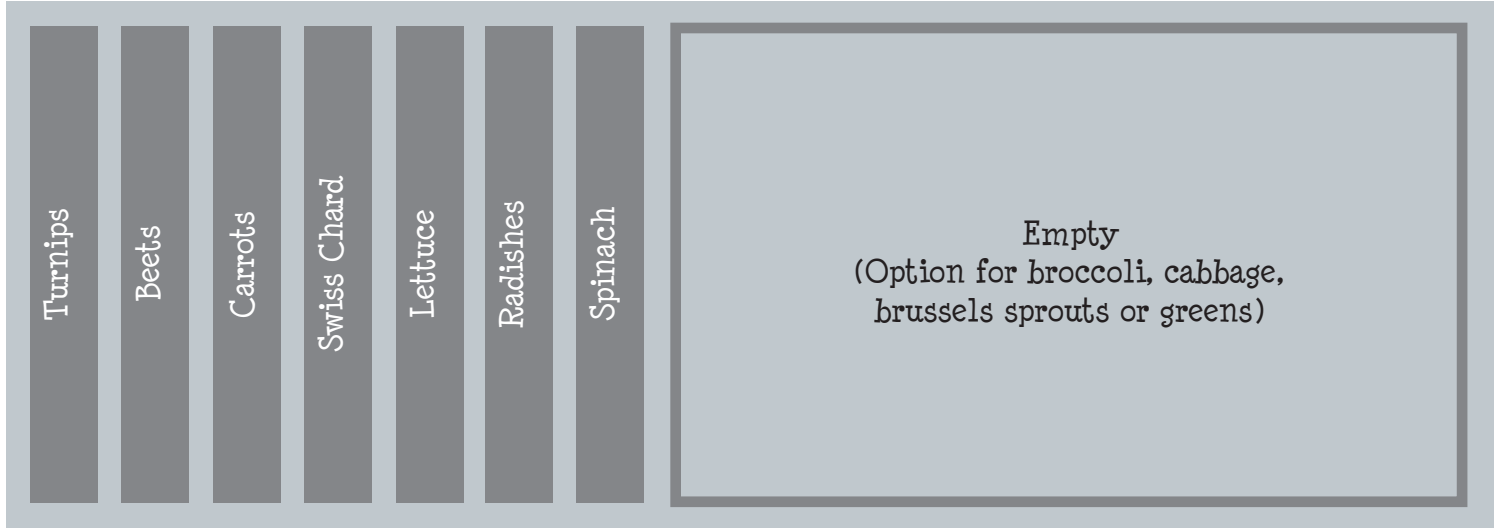
In mid July, I start my Fall Crops as Transplants. I know that after 6-8 weeks, in late August, they will be ready to move into my plot just as my squash, beans, peppers and cucumbers stop producing.

I can re-plant any of my Spring Crops as a succession planting in the fall too.

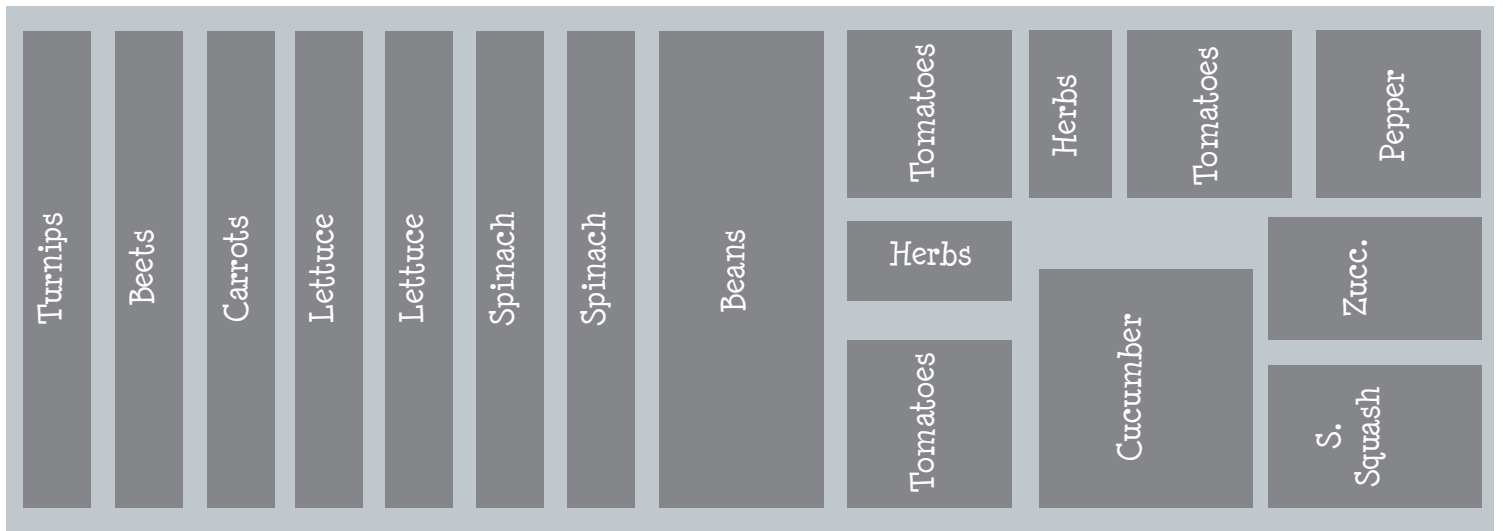
By following this plan, I expect to have a manageable but continuous harvest from late May until October.

WHAT IT ALL LOOKS LIKE

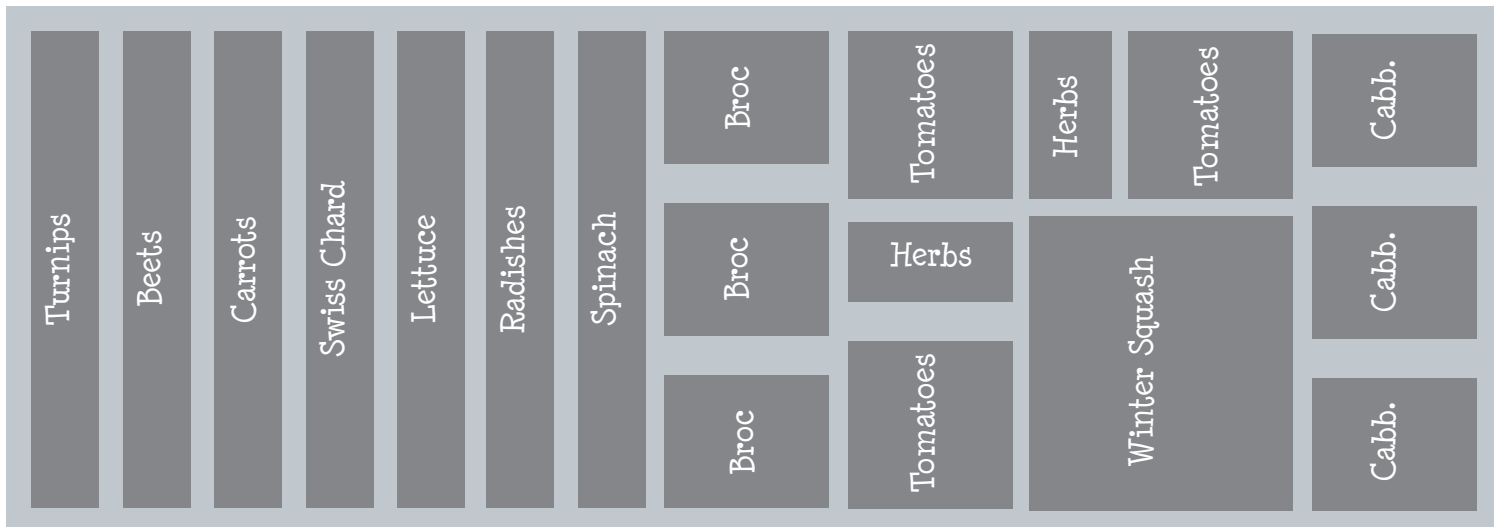
Spring



Summer



Fall



FOR A SQUARE FOOT BED

I can use the same style plan for a square foot bed too. This time I divide my bed into square foot sections. My bed is 12'x4', that gives me 48 squares to plant within. Remember, larger plants will take up more than just one square!

Spring

Beet	Beet	Carrots	Carrots	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach					
Beet	Beet	Carrots	Carrots	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach					
Turnip	Turnip	Chard	Chard	Radish	Radish	Spinach					
Turnip	Turnip	Chard	Chard	Radish	Radish	Spinach					

Summer

Beet	Beet	Carrots	Carrots	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach	Beans	Tomato & Basil	Herbs	Pepper
Beet	Beet	Carrots	Carrots	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach	Beans		Herbs	
Turnip	Turnip	Chard	Chard	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach	Beans	Tomato & Basil	Cucum.	S. Squash
Turnip	Turnip	Chard	Chard	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach	Beans		Zucc.	

Spring

Beet	Beet	Carrots	Carrots	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach	Brocc.	Tomato & Basil	Cabb.	Cabb.
Beet	Beet	Carrots	Carrots	Lettuce	Lettuce	Spinach			Cabb.	Cabb.
Turnip	Turnip	Chard	Chard	Radish	Radish	Spinach	Brocc.	Tomato & Basil	Winter Squash	
Turnip	Turnip	Chard	Chard	Radish	Radish	Spinach				

VEGETABLE PLANNING GUIDE

Earliest Planting

Early March
Early-March
Early-March
Mid-March
Mid-March
Mid-March
Mid-March
Late March
Late March
Late March
Early April
Early April
Early April
Early April
Early April
Early April
Mid-April
Mid-April
Early May
Mid-May
Mid-May
Mid-May
Early May
Mid-May
Late May
Late May

Peas
Cabbage
Spinach
Lettuce
Radish
Turnips
Beets
Broccoli
Cauliflower
Brussels Sprouts
Carrots
Chard
Collards
Mustard
Kale
Onions
Beans
Herbs
Cucumbers
Tomatoes
Squash
Okra
Eggplant
Corn
Melons
Pumpkins

Latest Planting

Early August
Mid-July
Late August
Late August
Early September
Mid-August
Mid-July
Early August
Early August
Early August
Late July
Late July
Early August
Early August
Mid-August
No Fall
Mid-July
Late June
Early July
Mid-June
Mid-July
Mid-July
Early May
Late June
Late June
Mid-June

PROPER SPACING FOR A SQUARE FOOT GARDEN

<u>Vegetable</u>	<u>Per Square</u>
Peas	8
Cabbage	1
Spinach	9
Lettuce	4 leaf 1 head
Radish	16
Turnips	9
Beets	9
Broccoli	1
Cauliflower	1
Brussels Sprouts	1 per 2 square feet
Carrots	16
Chard	4
Collards	1
Mustard	16
Kale	1
Onions	5 storage 16 green
Beans	9 bush 8 pole
Herbs	1-5
Cucumbers	1
Tomatoes	1 per 4 square feet
Squash	1 per 3 square feet
Okra	1
Eggplant	1
Corn	3
Melons	1 per 4 square feet
Pumpkins	1 per 4 square feet

