



A59 Setting up a square-foot garden



Square-foot gardening grows a lot of crops in a small space, ideal for groups of pupils, especially those starting off as it's a small, manageable space. Start by marking out a 4x4ft (120x120cm) plot and dividing it into 16 squares, each growing a different crop. This activity tells you how to set up this system with an example layout on the next page.

Resources

- Plot of land or raised bed
- Stakes and string
- Range of crops

Activity

- 1 Choose a plot or bed with good, healthy fertile soil. This is needed to support the intense growing required in a square-foot system.
- 2 Mark out an area 4x4ft (120x120cm) and divide up into 16 squares, 12x12 inches (30x30cm).
- 3 Plant each square with a different crop using close spacing. Sow/transplant crops so the tallest are at the back, with sizes decreasing progressively towards the front of the plot. The plot should face south for maximum sunlight. See example on the next page.
- 4 As soon as each crop is finished, replace with a different one throughout the growing season.

Top tip



Dwarf growing varieties

Small varieties make the close space and frequent harvesting far easier, although are not essential. See a full range at www.organiccatalogue.com

Health & Safety

Wash hands after handling soil.

See also *Health and Safety Guidelines (Section SG1.2)*

Further information

A9 Testing soil and improving fertility

A34 Developing a crop rotation plan

G4.8 Making full use of space

All New Square-Foot Gardening: Grow More in Less Space! by Mel Bartholomew.
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Example of a square-foot garden

