



Top Tips

Seed Sowing

Indoors

Check the Compost/Growing Medium You Are Using

For seeds you need a medium with a low level of nutrients but which can absorb and hold water well. If using a multipurpose compost make sure you add vermiculite to help stop it drying out too quickly.

Check the Size of Your Seeds

Very small seeds need to be sown on the surface of a tray and covered with a fine layer of vermiculite or compost (some need no covering at all).

Small seeds should be sown in drills (check the packet or books for the depth)

Large seeds should be sown directly into pots (check the packet or books for the size)

Aftercare For Seeds and Seedlings

Light, warmth and moisture are crucial; make sure you check them every day and water little and often (but don't overwater – watch out for green algae forming on top of the compost).

If the seedlings get most of their light from one direction turn the tray occasionally to make sure they don't grow lopsided!

Protect them from cold nights – even in May and June.

Pricking Out and Potting On

If in trays your seedlings should be pricked out and potted on as soon as they are big enough to be handled. They should be moved into a compost with more nutrients to help growth (such as multipurpose compost).

If in pots you can wait until your seedlings are sending their roots out the bottom of the pot before you move them into a bigger pot, ground soil, raised bed or growbag.

Pricking out seedlings must have at least 2 pairs of leaves before you prick them out, they are most at risk from drying out at the root or damage through careless handling. If you are outside or in a greenhouse try not to prick out in the midday heat; later afternoon is better. Prepare all your pots and make a planting hole in them BEFORE you start to loosen your seedlings. Hold the seedlings by their top leaves and loosen from under the compost with a large label, dibber etc. Try to lift all the roots with the seedling. Make sure the hole is large enough to accommodate the roots and gently firm in the seedling. Water all the pots generously immediately after you've finished a batch of pricking out. Keep them out of harsh sunlight for a couple of days.