

Container Planting and Companion Planting

How deep?

It is possible to grow nearly any plant in a container if you give it the right care and enough room. Don't forget that plants in a container will need very regular and generous watering.

Crop	Depth needed in container	Other information e.g. when to plant in Scotland
Asparagus	45cm/18"	
Beetroot (dwarf)	25cm / 10"	Under cover, from March
Beans – French/ Runner	20cm/ 9"	Beware of frost for French beans. Beware of mice
Beans – Dwarf/ Bush	15cm/ 6"	Beware of mice. Frost affects the roots in containers
Broad Beans	20cm / 8"	Beware of mice.
Broccoli/ Calabrese/ Cauliflower (dwarf)	25cm / 10"	Use all year round cauliflower
Cabbage & kale (dwarf)	20cm/ 8"	
Carrots	20cm / 8"	e.g. early carrots or container carrots e.g. Rondelle
Chard/ Leaf Beet	20cm / 8"	
Courgettes & squashes	25cm / 10"	Avoid frosting - start under cover if poss
Garlic	15cm / 6"	

Crop	Depth needed in container	Other information e.g. when to plant in Scotland
Leeks	20cm / 8"	
Lettuce	10cm / 4"	Avoid frosts - start under cover or use fleece
Onions & Shallots	15cm / 6"	
Parsnips (dwarf)	20cm / 8"	Sow 2/3 seeds per planting spot, then thin to 1
Sweet peppers	20cm / 8"	Grow only under cover
Peas	15cm / 6"	As per season - beware mice
Potatoes	Several 30cm/ 1' stacking containers	
Radishes	10cm / 4"	
Spinach	20cm / 8"	
Tomatoes	20cm / 8"	
Turnips	20cm / 8"	
Chickweeds/ sorrels etc	10-15cm / 4-6"	
Apples	40-60cm / 15-24"	
Plums	45cm / 18"	
Blackcurrants	30cm / 1'	
Gooseberries	30cm/1'	
Strawberries	20cm / 8"	
Herbs	10-25cm/ 4-10"	

Companion Planting

Join the debate on companion planting! Through a combination of gardening experience, folklore and despite a scarcity of scientific evidence, many gardeners swear by companion planting - using a 'polyculture' approach to increase area yields, attract beneficial insects or deter pests, perhaps even deter weeds or prevent diseases, e.g. lettuce and radish may ward off fungal disease from each other whilst celeriac/ celery may stop cabbage white butterflies laying eggs and infesting plants. Why not try some companion planting and see if it works for you? Here are a few suggestions (and more in the Further Information and References section overleaf):

Crop	Plant With	Don't plant with
Asparagus	Basil, tomato	
Beans	Carrots, squash, sweetcorn	Onions & garlic
Beetroot, Spinach, Chard	Onions & garlic	tomatoes
Carrots	Chives, leeks, lettuce, garlic, tomato	Dill & fennel
Squash	Beans, nasturtiums, sweetcorn	Potatoes
Leek	Carrot onions & garlic	
Lettuces	Dill & all annual herbs	
Nasturtium	Tomatoes, radishes, cabbage, cucumbers. <i>Plant nasturtiums under fruit trees, deters aphids</i>	
Onions & garlic	Beetroot, chards, lettuce, strawberry <i>Protects against slugs</i>	Beans & peas, cabbages
Peas	Lettuce, squash	
Potatoes	Potatoes, corn, cabbages, horseradish (<i>deters potato beetle</i>)	Onions
Radish	Lettuce, squash, peas – radish is generally good at deterring insects	

Strawberry	Lettuce, beans, spinach	
Tomato	Asparagus, basil, carrot, onions & garlic	Potatoes, red cabbage, beetroot

Other beneficial plants:

Marigolds: keep soil free of nematodes, discourages many insects –plant freely

Mint: deters cabbage moth

Petunia: protects beans, good throughout the garden

Rosemary: deters cabbage moth, bean beetle & carrot fly

Tansy: plant under fruit trees, deters pests on raspberries & flying insects & ants etc

Further Information and References

The Edible Container Garden, Michael Guerra. Gaia Books Ltd. 2000, ISBN: 1 85675 089 2

Practical Organic Gardening, David Palliser. Crowood Press. 1992, ISBN: 1 85223 622 1

The Pocket Vegetable Expert, Dr. D. G. Hessayon. Expert Books. 2002, ISBN: 0 903505 57 6

Thomson and Morgan Companion Planting Guide at <http://www.thompson-morgan.com/companion-planting-guide>

BBC Garden Guides – Companion planting

http://www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/basics/techniques/organic_companionplanting1.shtmlhttp://www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/basics/techniques/organic_companionplanting1.shtml

The Myth of Companion Plantings “Certain species will thrive, lean on, nestle with, and support each other in groupings” Linda Chalker-Scott, Ph.D., Extension Horticulturist and Associate Professor, Puyallup Research and Extension Center, Washington State University at http://puyallup.wsu.edu/~Linda%20Chalker-Scott/Horticultural%20Myths_files/Myths/Companion%20plants.pdf and http://puyallup.wsu.edu/~Linda%20Chalker-Scott/Horticultural%20Myths_files/index.html



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