



GARDENING **ON A BUDGET**

During a Cost of Living Crisis

envii

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Dear reader,

Gardening is not only a hobby for many but is a necessity for some. We could go into all the benefits of gardening but we want to focus on what is most prevalent now- the cost.

More specifically the money you can save from growing your own.

With cost-of-living on the rise, it is becoming increasingly important to save money wherever you can. Generally, it is of the opinion that gardening is expensive but we want to debunk that myth and make it clear that gardening is as cheap or as expensive as you make it. You don't need an acre of land, a landscaper or the trendiest raised beds to be able to grow crops. You don't even need a garden!

We want to be clear that gardening can be expensive, but so can walking if you walk past enough of your favourite bookshops.

If you are currently sceptical about trying to grow your own, we want to start by saying don't be! Growing your own food is easier than you might first think. If you are looking to gain some confidence start off by growing something simple or that looks after itself such as a herb. And even if you fail, you will have learnt, and be in a better position to succeed the next time.


This eBook will cover everything from the cheapest veggies to grow, to small space growing, to how to preserve crops. Hopefully, by the end of this, you will be able to confidently go out and grow your own whilst saving yourself some money.

From The Envii Team 



Why you should grow during a cost of living crisis...

Many families are finding it difficult to cope with the rising cost of food, however, just outside your own back-door, there may be a small space that can be transformed into your very own grocers.



Not only can growing your own food be good for your pocket, but it can also be good for your physical and mental health.

Simply being in the fresh air, and enjoying nature is a great way to de-stress while doing something worthwhile towards feeding yourself and your family.

Equipment

Gardening equipment can be expensive to buy but you do not necessarily need a fancy green house, heated propagator or flashy seed trays.

If you can use your imagination to re-use and recycle, you can save your hard-earned money.

Try setting seeds in mushroom trays and placing a clear plastic strawberry punnet over the top before placing them on a bright window sill, it will work just like a greenhouse or propagator.

Re-use yoghurt pots with drainage holes punched into the bottom as plant pots when seedlings need potting up.



Something to consider before you begin:

Don't run before you can walk, take on what is manageable for you.

Only grow what you and your family enjoy eating.

Re-use and recycle as much as you possibly can. Not only is this kind for the environment but even kinder on your pocket.

Failure is normal, be prepared for pests and diseases. Remember it's just mother nature and there is always a solution to the problem, accept and learn from it.

Gardening Checklist

ESSENTIALS

- ☐ Compost
- ☐ Seeds
- ☐ Seed trays
- ☐ Trowel
- ☐ Pots or tubs
- ☐ Plant tags
- ☐ Water source



NON-ESSENTIALS

- ☐ Fertiliser
- ☐ Secateurs
- ☐ Gardening gloves



Small Space Growing

Before getting stuck in, it is important to assess the space you have available and consider what you would like to do and what is physically possible. It is possible to grow even in the smallest of spaces if you think creatively.

**For example we transformed
our car park into a garden!**

Before



After



Raised Beds

If it isn't possible to grow directly in the ground in your space, grow in raised beds, pots, flower boxes or hanging baskets. Raised beds or any square container allows you to use every inch of space.



[Click here to watch the video.](#)

Don't forget to make sure there's lots of ventilation at the bottom! Do this by drilling large holes in the bottom of your pot if they don't have them already and add a layer of sticks or rocks at the bottom before adding your compost.

When growing in pots and containers, nutrients are depleted from the soil far quicker than when growing in the ground. So it would be worth investing in good quality, highly concentrated fertiliser so you get more for your money.

[Click here to discover more!](#)





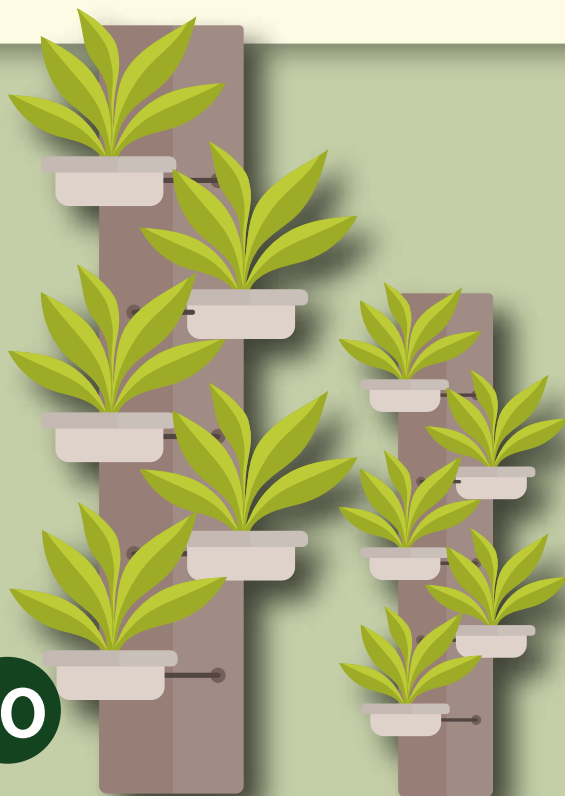
Utilising wall space

Vertical Growing

A popular way of growing in small spaces is vertical growing. Whereby plants are grown in vertical frames that are attached to walls.

The benefits of this include removing the need to get on your hands and knees and reduced pest damage.

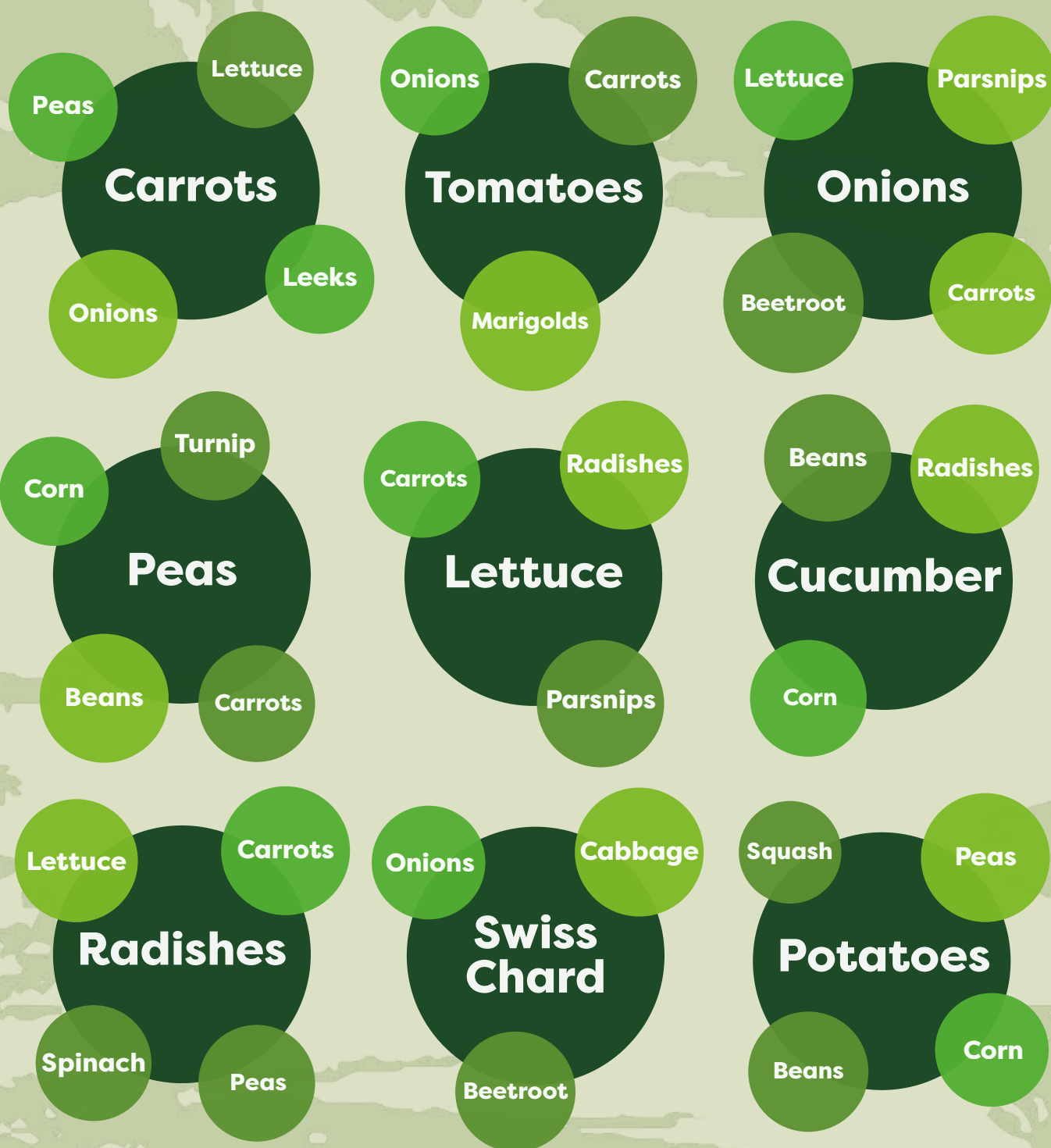
If you are wanting to learn more on vertical growing head over to our vertical gardening blog, [here](#).



Using a hydroponic system

Companion Planting Guide

Companion planting is the process of placing two or more plants together for mutual advantage. This method usually occurs but is not confined to a vegetable garden. Flowers that tend to suffer from persistent pest damage may also benefit from companion planting.



 Vegetables and flowers in this colour are the best companions.



Time to Get Growing!

When it comes to growing, it's actually very simple...



How to Sow Seeds

Add some compost into small pots, add seeds, cover with another light dusting of compost and water through. Leave the seeds to germinate on a windowsill and once the seedling has at least 3 leaves, begin hardening them off after any signs of frost are gone.

Hardening off is the process of bringing your plants outside during the day and bringing them back inside at night. Do this for between a week and 2 weeks to acclimatise the plants to the weather outside. Then you can plant them outside.



Water plants every couple of days depending on weather and feed once a week. As soon as something is ready to harvest, do so to allow space for further crops. Don't forget to weed occasionally to reduce competition!



Low Maintenance Crops

There are lots of plants out there that need very little maintenance and are perfect for those with busy lifestyles.



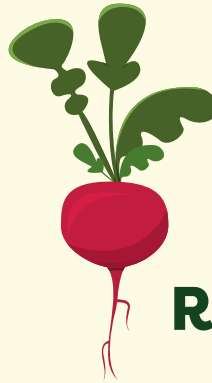
Rhubarb



Strawberries



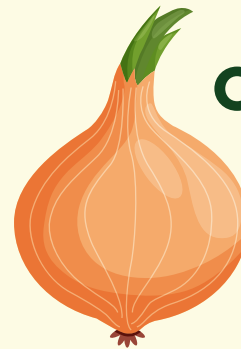
Garlic



Radish



Beans



Onions



Peas



Kale & Lettuce

How to Grow

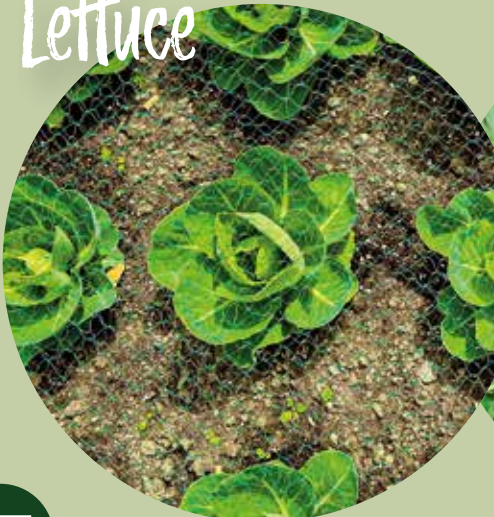
All instructions on how to grow can be found on the back of a seed packet. However, if you do wish to have more information, check out our how-to-grow guides.



There are some plants that produce crops fast. With these veg, you can plant them multiple times throughout the growing season and have a continuous flow of produce.

Good examples of these include radishes, lettuce and peas. For example, instead of planting 10 lettuce in February, you could plant 5 and then 5 more in July, this will reduce the chances of having a glut.

Lettuce



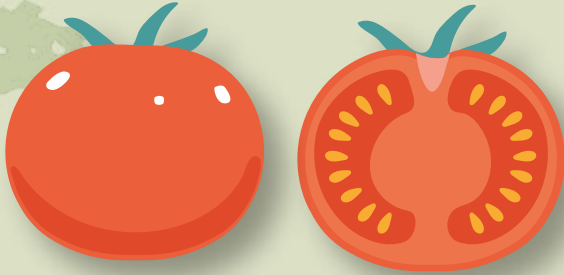
Radish



Peas



How to Save Seeds



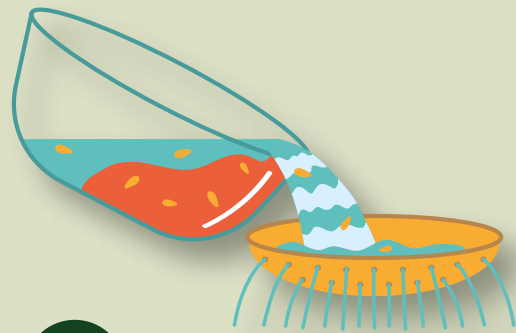
- 1** Extract the seeds from your chosen fruit or vegetable.



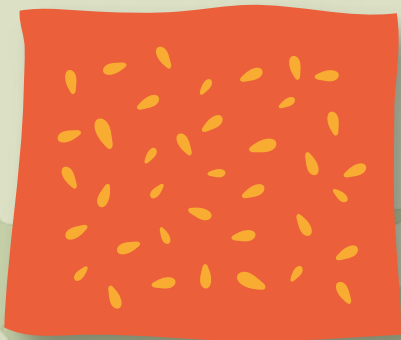
- 2** Put the seeds into a bowl and add water.



- 3** Stir around the mixture to help separate the seeds from the pulp.



- 4** Rinse out the mixture using a sieve or muslin.



- 5** Place the seeds on a paper towel to dry them off.



- 6** Add the seeds to a storage bag or box and seal shut until you are ready to use.

How to store and preserve:

Even with the most meticulous planning, there will almost always come a time when there is a glut of fruit, vegetables or herbs from your garden.

Like this



Utilising different methods of storing and preserving prevents waste and can help to fill in the gaps between the availability of fresh crops, making it possible to enjoy foods outside of their normal growing season.

Methods for storing fruit and vegetables can include freezing, pickling, preserving, bottling and drying. In all methods, it is most important to store only top-quality produce that is disease and damage free.

**From fresh
produce**



**to preserved
goods!**

When using any method of preserving food it is important to follow some simple rules.

1

Keep all your work surfaces and any equipment clean. Always prepare and preserve your produce as soon as is possible after harvesting.

2

Store preserves in a cool, dark, dry and frost-free environment.

3

Always clearly label and date frozen and preserved produce and consume it within the recommended time frame.

4

Only use the very best quality and the freshest of produce, avoiding damaged crops.



A great way to preserve your home-grown produce for a long period of time is pickling. This method involves marinating and storing produce in an acid solution such as vinegar or brine.



It is possible to pickle a wide variety of fruit and vegetables including beets, cauliflower, green beans, tomatoes, onions, blueberries, peaches, rhubarb and strawberries.



This can be done with either vinegar or a salt-based solution called brine. It is the method of marinating and storing produce in an acidic solution. Most home pickles will store for between 5 to 6 months in a jar so it is very important to label them with the date of pickling.

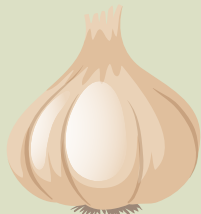
Almost all jars of pickles should be stored in the refrigerator. Keep all unopened pickles in a cool dark cupboard.

Jams and chutneys are another great way of preserving. This is the process of cooking the produce down with either sugars or spices and storing them in a sterilised jar.

Chilli Jam Recipe



300G GOLDEN
CASTER SUGAR



4 PEELED LARGE
GARLIC CLOVES

1 TBSP THAI
FISH SAUCE



6-7CM PIECE OF
ROOT GINGER SLICED



4 LARGE RED
CHILLIES



500G RIPE
TOMATOES


HOW TO

- BLITZ HALF OF THE TOMATOES WITH ALL THE GARLIC, CHILLIES AND GINGER UNTIL SMOOTH.
- POUR INTO A HEAVY-BASED SAUCEPAN.
- ADD THE GOLDEN CASTER SUGAR, THAI FISH SAUCE AND BRING TO A BOIL.
- STIR SLOWLY AND ONCE BOILED REDUCE HEAT TO A SIMMER.
- DICE THE REMAINING TOMATOES FINELY AND ADD TO THE PAN, SIMMER FOR 30-40 MINUTES STIRRING FROM TIME TO TIME.
- WHILE THE MIXTURE IS STILL WARM POUR IT INTO A DRY STERILISED JAR AND SEAL TIGHT, THIS CREATES AN AIRTIGHT SEAL.

We hope this eBook has given you the confidence and the basics needed to go out and grow your own. Remember, you won't be perfect from the start. It is a skill that is learned. If you fail, pick yourself back up and try again.

Growing is something that you should enjoy. Get your friends, family and children involved and don't overcomplicate it.

The reason you started growing might be because of the cost of living crisis, but who knows, you may carry on because of the many other benefits you notice!

Good luck! 

Need more advice? Get in touch with us via email, phone or chat.

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 Scan the QR code to chat to us

