



Supporting school gardening projects

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Developing Positive Minds & Healthy
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KNOW YOUR VEG Discover peas

Here's the chance for you to discover some of the basic facts about Peas as well as some essential growing tips. Use these to decide whether you want to grow the vegetable, whether you are able to and what you need to do or look out for in order to grow a bountiful crop!



- Other names:** Pisum Sativum
- Appearance:** A small, edible round green bean which grows in a pod on a vine
- Popular varieties:** 3 main types: garden, sugarsnap & mangetout
- Interesting fact:** voted the nation's 7th favourite vegetable in 2005
- Nutritional value:** high in carbohydrates; vitamin; protein; dietary fibre
- When to grow:** From seed early to mid-spring (+ 10 degree C) through to mid summer
- Grown from:** Seed either in trays at first or straight in the ground when it is warmer (+8 degrees C)
- Likes:** Warm soil (using polythene) when being planted and with seedlings protected by fleece; as they climb they like being supported by canes or stakes with netting; regular watering to avoid dry soil; organic mulch to hold moisture in ground
- Dislikes:** Hot weather or cold wet ground; pea moth (tiny caterpillars), slugs, birds and mice
- Harvest time:** Early to mid summer through to autumn
- Watch out for:** Pests - protect all young plants with netting or fleece material; mildew in dry conditions
- Cooking tips:** Eat raw straight from the pod or cook as an accompaniment in hot meals such as pies or casseroles or for use in soups

Essential Growing Tips for peas



- There are two main types of peas. Shelling peas grow inside the pods which are broken open to reach the peas. Mangetout peas can be eaten pods and all. Depending on variety, peas grow from 75cm high to 1.5m tall.
- Peas like moist fertile soil.
- Tall growing peas will give the biggest harvests. They will need some support. Use thin sticks or netting to give the plants something to climb up. These should be put in place as soon as the plants develop tendrils.
- Try growing peas with broad beans. Both can be harvested around the same time. The broad beans will support the peas as they grow.
- Birds especially pigeons like the young shoots and will eat them. They bite the tops from the plants and stop them growing. Protect the shoots with anti-bird netting, scarecrows or bird scaring humming lines.
- Peas can be sown into the soil about 5cm deep, and 7cm apart. Cover the rows with anti-bird netting as birds will eat the seeds - as will mice!
- Peas can be started in a greenhouse. Use a rowplanter and fill it with compost. When the seedlings are ready to go outside, dig a trench the size of the piping and simply slide the young plants out of the pipe and into the trench. This avoids having to disturb the roots.
- Pick peas regularly. This will encourage more pods to form. Mangetout peas should be picked as soon as the peas look like tiny swellings in the pods.
- When the crop has finished, cut off the stems. Leave the roots as they will release nitrogen into the soil.

**For further information call 0845 402 5300, or visit
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