



## Supporting school gardening projects

www.

**budding gardeners**  
co.uk

Developing Positive Minds & Healthy  
Bodies for a Brighter Future!



# KNOW YOUR VEG

## Discover runner beans



Runner Beans

Here's the chance for you to discover some of the basic facts about Runner Beans 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:** Phaseolus Coccineus

**Appearance:** Robust and energetic climbing plant (up to 3m) that produces green foliage, vivid flowers and long runner bean pods

**Popular varieties:** White Lady AGM and White Apollo AGM

**Interesting fact:** Runner bean plants were brought to the UK from central America and Mexico in the 17th century as ornamental exotics and only later were they used as vegetables

**Nutritional value:** Good source of vitamin C, folic acid (vitamin B) and fibre

**When to grow:** Seed into pots indoors between mid-spring to late spring; plant out at the bottom of upright canes in early summer once the danger of late spring frosts have passed

**Likes:** Warm and sheltered positions; well-rotted organic matter and fertiliser feed into the soil before planting; regular watering and weeding; bamboo obelisk structure or stout cane sticks about 15cm apart to support their long twining stems that just love to hoist themselves upwards

**Dislikes:** Frost, slugs, snails and mice.

**Harvest time:** From early summer; pick when small, before any swelling of seeds and snap off the plant

**Watch out for:** Any sign of pests, i.e. chewed stems or uprooted seeds

**Cooking tips:** Boil or steam; use as an accompaniment to many hot meals or simply leave to cool or salads

# Essential Growing Tips for runner beans

---



Runner Beans

- Easy to grow, they give good reliable harvests. The flowers are colourful usually red or white and attract lots of bees. They will continue flowering and producing beans up until the first autumn frosts.
- Beans can be sown outdoors in late May; or grown in pots ready to be planted outside in June. Do not try to sow too early outside. The temperature of the soil must be at least 10°C/50°F before the seeds will germinate.
- Plants grown inside will quickly need support for their stems. When planting outside, set out plants 15cm (6") apart. Use an obelisk or a frame for support and we recommend a willow obelisk, folding willow obelisk or flat packed pyramid obelisk. Loosely tie the young plants into the supports. After this, the beans will climb naturally and will not need tying in.
- The soil needs to be fertile and moist. It should not be acidic. Digging lots of compost or well rotted manure into the soil before planting helps. Runner beans put down deep roots. Use a thick mulch around the plants. This will help keep the moisture in the soil. In dry weather water frequently.
- Protect the young plants from slugs and rabbits. They will eat them! Use Nemaslug biological pest control to protect against slugs and rabbit wire around your growing area to fend off our furry friends. Nemaslug contains nematodes that are tiny microbes which have to be watered into the soil and attack the young slugs as they grow.
- Pick the beans frequently. Pods should be picked before the beans inside have begun to swell. The more pods you pick, the more the plants will produce. Picking will be needed every two or three days.
- At the end of the season, cut off the stems and place in the compost bin. Dig the roots and stem bases into the soil so that the nitrogen they have gathered is released.

---

**For further information call 0845 402 5300, or visit  
[www.buddinggardeners.co.uk](http://www.buddinggardeners.co.uk)**