



MINI-GARDENING

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Gardening in Limited Space

Lack of yard space is no excuse for not growing a vegetable garden. Regardless of whether you live in an apartment, condominium or mobile home, some space is available for growing a few of your favorite vegetables. However, the area you choose to grow your garden must receive five hours or more of sunlight daily. As a general rule, leafy vegetables such as cabbage and mustard greens can tolerate more shade than root vegetables like radishes and beets. Vegetables that bear fruit such as peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers will need the most sun.

Apartment dwellers will probably be limited to using containers or window boxes for vegetable growing. Always make sure the containers used are large enough to hold the vegetable plants when they reach maturity. All containers should have sufficient number of drainage holes in the bottom for proper drainage.

You have many more alternatives if you live in a duplex, a single unit or house and have access to an open yard. You may still use window boxes, but now you have access to borders along walkways and foundation plantings. You will be pleasantly surprised to see how attractive a walkway can be when edged with such plants as carrots in full foliage. There is also ample opportunity to

position large containers such as baskets with pepper or tomato plants.

Fences are ideal for growing many vegetables, especially vining types such as cucumbers and melons. Six to 8 ft of fence space could provide enough cucumbers for fresh consumption and ample supplies for pickling. Pole beans (lima and snaps) also do well here. When cantaloupe fruits begin to enlarge, tie to the fence in a sling made from nylon hose to avoid self-picking.

The soil mixture you use will have a great influence on your success. It should be free of disease, insect and weed pests and have a pH of about 6.0 to 6.5. Your county extension agent can provide you with a soil testing kit to test the pH of your soil.

You may purchase commercially prepared mixtures from garden centers or you can make your own mix by using equal parts of sand, loamy garden soil, and peat moss or composted leaves. Sterilization may be done by baking it in an oven for about one hour at 210°F to kill any bacteria, fungi, insects, or weed seeds.

For additional reading materials on limited space gardening, contact your local Cooperative Extension Center and ask for a copy of *Home Vegetable Gardening*, AG-06, and Horticulture Leaflet 8105, *Container Vegetable Gardening*.

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Planting Guide for Growing Vegetables in Limited Space

Crop	Varieties	Hardiness (Inches)*	In-Row Spacing	Light Requirements**	Where to Plant
Snapbeans (Bush)	Tenderette Derby	T	2 to 3	FS	Borders
Snap beans (Pole)	Kentucky Wonder Blue Lake	T	6 to 8	FS	Borders and screens
Beets	Little Egypt	T	3 to 4	PS	Containers of medium depth
Broccoli	Green Comet	HH	15 to 18	PS	Single plant in deep container or borders
Brussels Sprouts	Jade Cross	H	15 to 18	PS	Single plant in deep container or borders
Cabbage	Dwarf Morden	H	10 to 12	PS	Borders
Cantaloupe	Minnesota Midget Burpee Hyb.	T	20 to 24	FS	Along fences or trellis
Cauliflower	Early Snowball	HH	20 to 24	PS	Same as for broccoli
Carrots	Tiny Sweet	HH	3 to 4	PS	Deep container such as basket
Collards	Vates	H	12 to 18	PS	Borders
Cucumbers	Patio Pik	T	6 to 8	FS	Along fences or on trellis; good temporary screen
Eggplant	Fla. Highbush Morden Midget	T	24 to 30	FS	Basket or border; only 1 or 2 plants needed
Leafy Greens	Assorted	H	1 to 2	PS	Containers of medium depth (5 to 6 inches) or borders
Onions (Sets)	Excell, Ebenezer	H	2 to 3	FS (bulbs) PS (green)	Medium deep containers
Peppers (Sweet)	Calif. Wonder	T	10 to 12	FS	Deep containers or borders
Potato (Irish)	Pungo, Kennebec Boone (Mtn.)	HH	10 to 12	FS	Single plant in basket or deep bed
Radish	Cherry Belle	H	1 to 2	PS	Window boxes; container of shallow to medium depth
Squash	Baby Crookneck	T	12 to 15	FS	Deep container or borders
Tomato	Better Boy, Patio Tiny Tim	T	12 to 15	FS	Large, deep container (basket) and beds

* Indicates ability to withstand cold weather: T = susceptible to cold injury; plant only after frost. HH = Withstands medium but not severe cold; plant 1-3 weeks before last frost. H = Ability to withstand short periods of sub-freezing temperature.

** Vegetables indicated as growing in partial shade can also be grown in full light. When plants can only get light part of the day, such as beside a building, the morning sun exposure is preferred. FS = Full sun; PS = Partial shade.

*** All crops can be grown in ground beds. Where suitable for container culture the size or depth of container is indicated. Some containers are baskets, flower pots (clay or plastic), wooden boxes, tubs, cans, etc.

NOTE: For a more complete list of varieties see *Home Vegetable Gardening*, AG-06, and Horticulture Leaflet 8105, *Container Vegetable Gardening*.