

RHS Campaign for School Gardening



Supported by **Waitrose**

Vegetable Crop Planner

Germination times, growth rates and harvest dates

It is a fascinating fact that different vegetable seeds take different lengths of time to germinate. Cress seeds will germinate in two days – hence their popularity with children. Parsnips can take up to three weeks.

It is useful to know how long different vegetable seeds take to germinate, to avoid unnecessary worry that seeds are not going to grow and to realise that you just have to be patient. Remember, however, that germination is dependant on soil temperature and moisture so if the soil is very cold or dry seed won't germinate.

It is also essential when gardening in school to plan your sowing so you can harvest the crops in school term time. Here is a useful guide that should assist you with your planning. Crops have been grouped according to their growth rate:

Speedy crops can be ready for harvest in one term, 3 to 13 weeks (up to three months) after sowing or planting

Medium-term crops are sown or planted in one term to harvest in the next term, 14 to 25 weeks (three to six months) later

Slow-growing or long-season crops are sown or planted in one term to harvest in the next term or even the following term, 26 to 52 weeks (six months or more) later.

Speedy Crops				
Ready to harvest in one term (up to 3 months).				
Crop	Sowing time	Days to germinate or shoot	School term to harvest	Weeks to harvest
Beetroot	Feb-May	13	Summer	9 - 13
Carrots	Mar-Apr	16	Summer and autumn	11 - 14
Cucumber	Feb-Apr	9	Summer and holidays	10 - 13
French beans	Apr-May	14	Summer and autumn	9
Lettuce	Feb-Jun, Sep	7	Spring, summer and autumn	9 - 13
Peas (spring sown)	Feb-Mar	10	Summer	11
Potatoes (first early)	mid-Mar	14	Summer	12 - 15
Pumpkins and squash	Apr	7	Summer, holidays and autumn	9 - 13
Radish	Feb-Jun, Sep	6	Summer and autumn	3 - 6
Spinach	Mar-Jun	11	Summer and autumn	7 - 13
Turnips	Mar-Jun, Sep	8	Summer and autumn	7 - 12



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Medium-term Crops				
Sow one term, harvest the next (3 to 6 months).				
Crop	Sowing time	Days to germinate or shoot	School term to harvest	Weeks to harvest
Broad beans	Nov Feb-Mar	21	Late spring and early summer	20 - 26
Cabbage (early) seed	Aug	8	Spring	17+
plug plants	Sep		Spring	17+
Onion sets	Sep Feb-Mar	14	Mid-summer Late summer	20
Peas (autumn-sown)	Oct	10	Spring	17
Sweetcorn	May	9	Summer holidays and autumn	17+
Tomatoes	Feb-Apr	7	Summer holidays and autumn	14+

Slow-growing or Long-season Crops				
Sow in one term, harvest in next or following term (up to 12 months).				
Crop	Sowing time	Days to germinate or shoot	School term to harvest	Weeks to harvest
Broccoli	Mar and Jul	8	Spring	39 - 52
Brussels sprouts	Feb-Mar	8	Autumn	26 - 31
Leeks	Feb-Mar	14	Autumn and spring	29 - 34
Onion seeds	Mar	14	Summer	21 - 30
Parsnips	Mar-Apr	17	Autumn	21 - 30
Potatoes (maincrop)	mid-Apr	14	Early autumn	20+

Note: Crops shown in **bold** are recommended as the RHS Top Crops for Schools. For more information see the leaflet 'What to Sow and Grow'.

