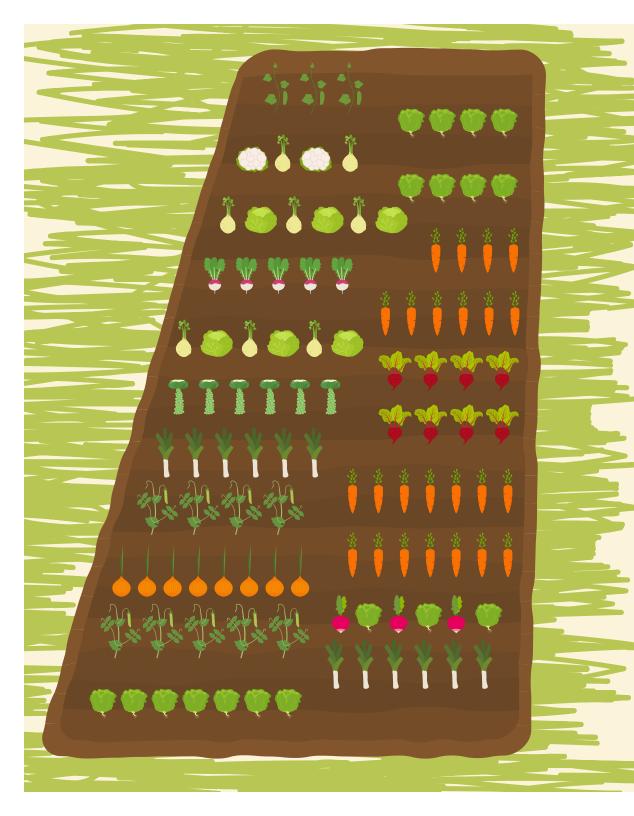
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE





GARDEN PLAN

Think about drawing a picture of your garden on a piece of paper. Your kids or grandkids can cut out pictures of vegetables you plan to grow. Then they can paste the pictures on the drawing. Place plants together that will mature at the same time so that they can be replaced with a new planting.

Look at seed catalogues, garden stores, or online sources for vegetable varieties and choose some to purchase.

JANUARY

Week 1 Plan layout of garden plots; test germination of seeds saved from last year	Garden Notes
Week 2 Decide on spring vegetable planting—how much and where—and map it out	
Week 3 Many varieties of vegetables can be sold out by spring; if you have specific varieties you like, order seeds now for spring seeding and transplants	
Week 4 Start your garden journal-keep notes on what you have done and plan to do	



Remove any dead plant material from the garden and compost, throw away, or burn.

Soils are often wet during this month. Dry soil can be lightly worked for early planting in March. A shovel can be used to work small gardens and a rake or hoe can be used to smooth the soil. If your garden is large, you may want to use a tiller. If you do not have a tiller perhaps you could borrow one from a neighbor or rent one from a farm store or equipment rental company.

If you haven't done so in a few years, have a soil test done through your local extension office. Follow their advice, such as adding lime, and lightly work it into the soil.

If you plan to garden in raised beds or containers you could begin looking for items. Raised beds can be unstructured or can be made of wood, stone, brick, or concrete blocks. Recycled buckets, tubs, animal feeding or watering troughs, or barrels could be used as containers for potting plants. Ensure that you can add holes to the bottom of the containers for water drainage. Make sure no chemicals have ever been stored in the container.

FEBRUARY

Week 1 Fix any broken garden equipment; clean and sharpen gardening tools	Garden Notes
Week 2 Prepare compost pile	
Week 3 Order fertilizer and lime for the spring and summer	
Week 4 Decide and plan how to water your garden and prepare accordingly	

Most of the time, the soil is starting to dry enough to prepare it for the garden. If soils are easy to work and the area is small, tillage with equipment (rototiller, tractor implements) is usually not necessary. Just lightly dig areas to be planted with a shovel or hoe.

Crops that can be planted in March include:

- Early: spinach and peas
- Middle of the month: collard plants, onion sets & seeds, radish, rhubarb, asparagus crowns, beets, kale, parsley
- End of the month: cole crops (such as cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli), potato pieces, lettuce

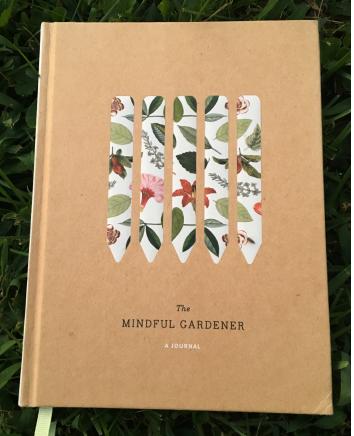
These are average dates for Kentucky. If you live in the western part of the state you may plant a week or so earlier; if you live in the eastern part of the state you may plant about a week later to allow the soil and air temperatures to warm a bit more. Look at the seed packets to determine the best growing temperatures for your plants.

When planting seeds, remember to follow the directions on the seed packet to know how deep to cover seeds. The seed packet will also tell you how close seeds should be planted in the row. For some crops such as lettuce, radish, and spinach, you can plant even closer than recommended and then pull up extra plants. Use "baby" plants for soups, salads, or use them on sandwiches. Keep pulling baby plants until remaining plants are at the proper spacing.

Involve children in this activity—they will be more likely to try these baby vegetables if they help in growing and picking them.

If you plant in areas where there was heavy weeds or grass growth, you may come across newly planted plants with stems cut through at the base. This is damage due to cutworms. By lightly digging around affected plants you may find the worm and can dispose of it. To protect valuable transplants from damage, enclose the lower stem of the transplant in a cardboard roll (paper towel or bathroom tissue roll) or surround the stem with aluminum foil. This can be removed in a few weeks.

Keep a journal of what you planted. Include when and where you planted each vegetable, the variety name of the vegetable, how fast the seedlings started to grow, and what the new seedlings looked like. Involve children by having them take pictures of your garden and adding them to the journal.



MARCH

Week 1 Clean garden space to get ready to plant-weed and remove old plants from last year	Garden Notes
Week 2 Prepare planting beds; clean containers for container gardening; turn compost	
Week 3 Spread mulch; plant potatoes; turn compost	
Week 4 Plant asparagus crowns; turn compost	







Plant cole crop plants in the garden (collards, cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli) the first half of April. This will allow plants to mature by early summer before hot weather causes their quality to decline. The next chance for planting these crops will be in late summer. By early April, it is getting too late to plant spinach and peas. Spinach can be planted later in the summer or early fall.

Crops that can be planted in April include:

- Middle of month: beans and sweet corn.
- End of the month: Crops with vines like cucumber, muskmelon/cantaloupe, summer and winter squash, and pumpkins.

Remember these are average dates for Kentucky. If you live in the western part of the state you may plant a week or so earlier; if you live in the eastern part of the state you may plant about a week later to allow the soil and air temperatures to warm a bit more.

Pumpkins planted in April often mature well before Halloween. If you want pumpkins for Jack-o-lanterns, delay planting until early to mid-June.

If you plan to install raised beds, this is a good month to do so. See notes in January about what materials to use. Beds should be at least six inches tall. Fill beds with a mixture of good garden soil and mix in organic material such as compost, well-rotted animal manure, or peat moss. Use about one part of organic material for every 3 parts soil. So if you add three shovels of soil, add one shovel of organic material. If your only source of organic material is fresh manure, wait until fall to add it, when your garden is finished for the season. Fresh manure may contain bacteria that is harmful to humans. Applying it in the fall gives it time to interact with good soil organisms and get rid of the harmful bacteria. For containers, it is best to use potting soil that you purchase from a store. Regular garden soil does not work well in containers.

APRIL

Week 1 Seed peppers, tomatoes, melons, squash, cucumbers for transplants; turn compost	Garden Notes
Week 2 Update your garden journal with any new notes or plans	
Week 3 Prepare trellises or stakes for cucumbers and beans; turn compost	
Week 4 Buy herb transplants—these do well in pots or directly in soil in the garden	







Even if you have not planted beans, sweet corn, and vining crops (cucumbers, squash), you can continue to plant them in May in all parts of the state.

Now is the time to plant crops that are particularly sensitive to cold and frost: this includes tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and okra. It is very important to protect these plants from frost. The last frosts of the season usually occur in early May in western Kentucky, mid-May in central Kentucky, and later May in eastern Kentucky.

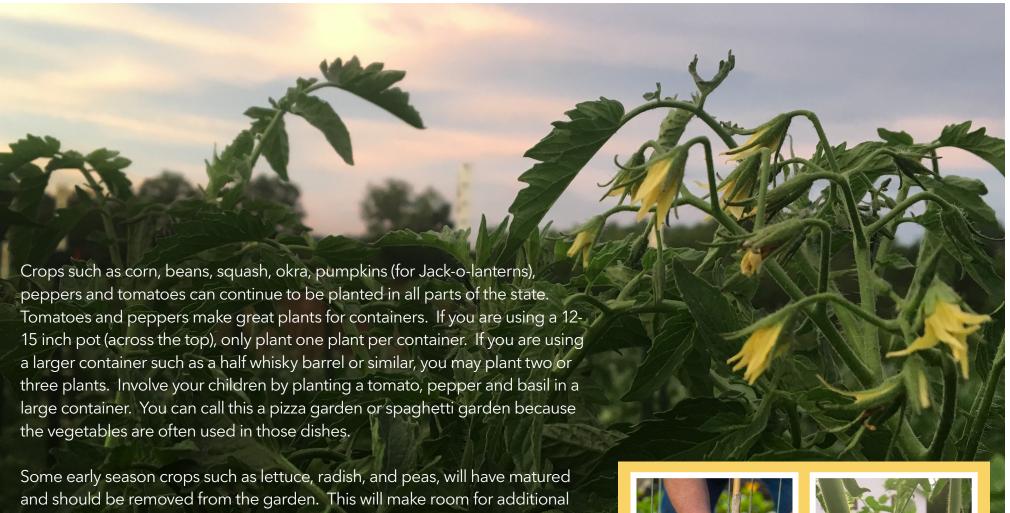
To protect plants from frost, use a large flower pot placed over the plant on the evening before the frost. Be sure to remove the pot as temperatures warm—sunlight hitting a dark colored pot may quickly cause the pot to get too hot and damage the plant. Children might like to participate in covering and uncovering the plants.

As plants continue to grow, lightly turn the soil around plants to control weeds. A layer of straw, newspaper, cardboard, or plastic mulch between plants will help control weeds and keep the soil moist.

If you are growing in raised beds or containers, the soil will dry out faster than it does in a regular garden. Water when the top of the soil feels dry. Evenly apply water around the bed or container. For raised beds, apply enough water to wet the soil about six inches deep. Use a garden trowel or shovel to check how deep the water has moved. For containers, apply water until some water drains out the hole at the bottom of the container. Containers may need to be watered every day or two. Raised beds usually need to be watering about twice a week, unless it rains.

MAY

Week 1 Lay stakes for tomatoes; plant herbs; turn compost	Garden Notes
Week 2 Transplant peppers, tomatoes, melons, squash, cucumbers	
Week 3 Plant sweet potatoes slips (about 90 days until harvest); look for pests and diseases in the garden	
Week 4 Direct seed sweet corn (about 75 days until harvest); continue to write in your journal and note specific varieties of vegetables that have done well	



crops such as those listed above.

Tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, and peppers are all related; they belong to the same family of plants. Planting these plants in the same location for several years in a row, may allow diseases in the soil and can often build up and produce problems with future crops. It is best to move these plants around in the garden and not follow one plant with a related plant for a few years. For example, after you have grown tomatoes or potatoes in an area for a few years, plant beans or corn in that area for the next few years. Better yet, and especially if you have a small garden, consider growing some of them in containers.





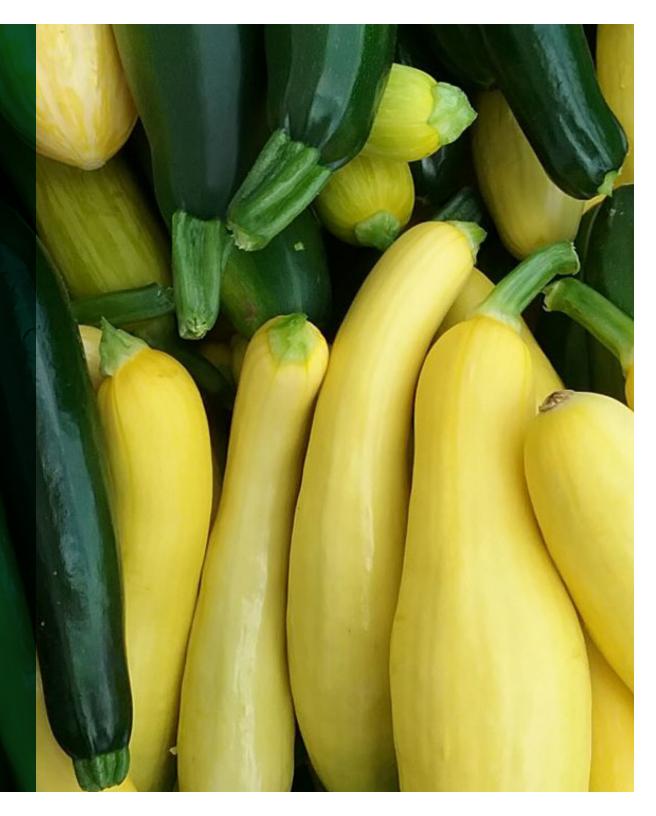
JUNE

Week 1 Weed garden; prepare to harvest summer squash; stake or trellis tomatoes and peppers; continue to journal and comment on your garden	Garden Notes
Week 2 Turn compost pile; weed and look for pests and diseases (contact your county extension agent if you find pest or disease issues)	
Week 3 Fertilize tomatoes and peppers that have begun to set fruit, refer to U.K.'s ID-128 publication for nutrient requirements; weed and look for pests and diseases	
Week 4 Weed and look for pests and diseases; prepare for tomato and pepper harvest; prepare to can and preserve goods from the garden (contact your county extension office for information about canning and preserving produce)	

In July, many crops are beginning to mature. Corn is harvested over a shorter period of time than some other crops as all of the ears ripen at about the same time. This allows the crop to be removed after the harvest and another crop planted in its place. Other crops, like beans and tomatoes, produce over weeks or months and allow several harvests from the same plant.

Even though temperatures are warm, now is the time to think about planting for fall harvest. Carrots, beets, cabbage plants and parsnips planted in July will mature in early fall. July is also a good time for a second crop of beans or even corn if it matures quickly (75 days or less, check the seed package for maturity information often listed as "days to maturity").

Many crops are maturing their fruit during the hot summer months and need enough water to do so. If rainfall is scarce, consider watering your garden. Water is best applied around the base of the plant rather than to the foliage, so use soaker hoses or hand water with a hose as opposed to a sprinkler. It is more important to water thoroughly than often. Apply water so that the soil is wet to a depth of 6-8 inches. This should provide for the needs of the plant for about a week. Involve your children in watering the garden, they will love it.



JULY

Week 1 Prepare to harvest tomatoes and peppers; keep plants picked and pruned for continued production throughout the summer; weed and look for pests and diseases	Garden Notes
Week 2 Prepare garden beds for new plantings; turn compost	
Week 3 Weed and look for pests and diseases; turn compost	
Week 4 Turn compost; update garden journal with new notes, observations, or plans	



August is the time for making the last plantings of warm-season vegetables that mature fairly quickly. Beans and summer squash that are planted early in the month will have time to mature. Continue to plant cool weather crops such as carrots, beets, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, turnips, and kale plants.

Fall broccoli in Kentucky most often has superior quality compared to spring broccoli. This is because the broccoli florets are maturing during cooler temperatures in fall which promotes better quality. Keep a close watch for pests. The green colored cabbage looper caterpillar may be especially plentiful during the fall growing season. Your children may enjoy looking for these caterpillars in the garden. They might enjoy raising some caterpillars in a covered container (with holes for air). Have them add a few fresh leaves each day from the plant that was home to the caterpillar. The caterpillars will soon make pupa and then will hatch into butterflies.

August is usually hot and dry. Check the soil for moisture every few days. Raised beds will dry out quicker than the ground.

AUGUST

Week 1 Begin to seed transplants in trays for the fall, such as lettuce, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, and mustard greens; weed and look for pests and diseases	Garden Notes
Week 2 Check on sweet corn to see if it is ready to harvest; turn compost	
Week 3 Weed; look for pests and diseases; check on your seedlings from week 1 to see if they are ready to transplant (they should have at least two true leaves)	
Week 4 Turn compost; direct seed snow peas; write in your garden journal	



radishes, spinach and lettuce mature very quickly and also hold up against light frost so they can be planted with a good chance of maturing. Turnips may be planted in early September in areas where other crops have matured and will provide roots and greens for much of the fall and early winter. Mustard greens may be inserted among the turnips. A container garden planted with radishes is a great activity for children. The seeds germinate in a few days and the radishes begin to form in a little

In the absence of vegetable crops in September, consider planting a cover crop such as ryegrass, winter rye, or winter wheat. These plants grow during the fall and winter and capture nutrients from the soil. They are tilled under in spring several weeks before planting the garden, and slowly release nutrients to the soil during the growing season. Cover crops are always a good option when your garden is bare for a few months.



SEPTEMBER

Week 1 Begin direct seeding of beets, carrots, spinach, and turnips; check to see if sweet potatoes are ready to harvest; turn compost	Garden Notes
Week 2 Remove any dead or dying tomato and pepper plants; weed garden	
Week 3 Cut herbs and hang to dry for use as spices later on (consider saving dried herbs to give as gifts)	
Week 4 Write in your garden journal	



OCTOBER

Week 1	Garden Notes
Harvest winter squash; turn compost	
Week 2	
Check on beets, carrots, and turnips to see if they are ready to harvest; store any unused seeds in air-tight, sealed containers	
Week 3	
Spread mulch on winter vegetables; bring container plants indoors	
Week 4	
For spring planting, collect soil sample from your garden and take to your county extension office; write in your garden journal	



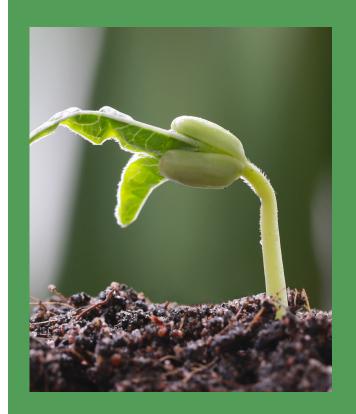
NOVEMBER

Week 1	Garden Notes
Turn compost	
Week 2	
Remove stakes and trellising for winter; remove any unwanted debris from the garden	
Week 3	
Winterize watering system (outdoor faucets, garden hoses, etc.)	
Week 4	
Turn compost and cover with tarp for the winter	



DECEMBER

Week 1	Garden Notes
Write in your garden journal about plans for next year and any thoughts from this past year	
Week 2	
Consider giving gifts from your garden to family and friends, such as dried herbs or canned goods	
Week 3	
Enjoy some of the items you canned or preserved from your garden	
Week 4	
Have a Happy New Year!	





Growing Your Own Beginner Gardening Guide Glossary

- **Cole crop plants**–Cole crop plants–vegetables in the genus Brassica, such as cauliflower, broccoli, kale, and mustards.
- **Compost**–organic material that has been well decomposed by organisms under conditions of good aeration and high temperatures often added to the soil to improve plant growth.
- **Container garden**—a form of gardening where plants are grown in containers rather than directly in the ground.
- **Cover crop**—a crop grown to protect the soil from erosion during the time of year when it would normally be bare, or a crop grown for building up or maintaining soil health; not a crop grown to eat or sell.
- **Crop rotation**—planting a different species of plant in an area of the garden each year to prevent buildup of diseases or insects associated with particular crops.
- **Direct seeding**-putting a seed in the soil where it will stay and grow into a mature plant.

- Cole crop plants-Cole crop plants-vegetables in the genus Brassica, such as cauliflower, broccoli, kale, and mustards.
- Fertilizer-material that adds nutrients to soil.
- **Furrow**—a narrow trench in the soil.
- **Germination**—the sprouting of a seed.
- **Manure**—waste from animals used to enrich soil.
- Maturity or harvest date—the number of days from when a plant is seeded or transplanted until it is ready to harvest.
- **Mulch**—any substance, such as straw, used to protect roots of plants from heat, cold, or drought, or to keep fruit clean.
- Organic matter-plant and animal material that is either broken down or in the process of breaking down.
- **Raised bed**—a form of gardening where the soil is formed into beds above ground. Soil can be free standing or enclosed in a frame of wood, block, concrete, or brick.
- **Seed leaf**—the first leaf that emerges from the seed.
- **Seeding**—sowing seeds; putting seed in soil.
- Seedling—a young plant grown from seed.
- **Soil testing**—a test that determines what nutrients are needed in the soil.
- **Thin/thinning**-removal of excess seedlings spaced too closely together for optimum growth.
- **Till/tilling**—to work the soil for the purpose of loosening the soil, creating a good seed bed, controlling weeds, or incorporating fertilizer.
- **Transplant**—a young plant grown inside for later planting outside.
- **Transplanting**—moving a plant from one location to another.
- **True leaves**—the second set of leaves produced by a seedling; these leaves look similar to the normal leaves of the mature plant.
- **Wilting**-drooping or limpness in plants.

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