

Good Allotment Gardening Practices





What is the Allotment Gardening Scheme?

As Singapore transforms into a City in Nature, NParks is launching new initiatives to bring nature closer to all residents. One such initiative is 'Gardening with Edibles', which has enabled more members of the community to grow their own edibles and experience the benefits to health and well-being that come from gardening. To support this growing interest in edible gardening, by 2030, NParks aims to increase the number of community gardens island-wide to 3,000 and the number of allotment plots in parks to 3,000 under our flagship gardening programme, Community in Bloom.

Today, more than 1,700 allotment garden plots have been made available under NParks' Allotment Gardening Scheme in our parks across the island. The scheme has enabled individuals to lease gardening plots in our parks to hone their gardening skills and enjoy growing their own plants.

Good Allotment Gardening Practices

Allotment Gardens in our parks are communal spaces that enable members of the public to visit and appreciate these gardens. It is essential to have good gardening etiquette and maintain a well-kept allotment garden plot to ensure the gardens are safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Tip 1:

Keep all plants and structures to 1 m in height from the top of the planter bed.

This will ensure accessibility for easy maintenance, allow adequate sunlight for your plants and minimise the amount of shade cast on other plots.



Tip 2:

Keep passageways clear of pots, plant debris and garden tools. Ensure that hanging planters, pots, trellises and other structures do not protrude out of the plot.

Clear passageways will help to reduce tripping and falling in the garden.



Tip 3:

Space out the plants for good air circulation.



Good Allotment Gardening Practices

Tip 4:

Trim your plants regularly and keep them below 1 m in height.



Tip 5:

Avoid plants with thorns or spines to reduce the likelihood of injury.



Tip 6:

Regularly remove weeds and plants that are dead or diseased.

Clear away leaf litter and any debris from your plot and the surrounding area.



Tip 7:

Loosen hardened soil for better plant growth.



Good Allotment Gardening Practices

Tip 8:

Regularly check for stagnant water that might collect at the base of plant stems, amongst leaf litter or inside trellis poles.



Tip 9:

Avoid plants that tend to collect water (such as bromeliads, cocoyams and pitcher plants).



Tip 10:

Keep all belongings such as loose pots, bottles, fertilisers, pesticides and gardening tools in the storage box provided when not in use.



Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots

1. Prepare your plot

Prepare a suitable soil mix



Give your edibles a good start by providing them with a suitable soil mix. To create your own mix, combine 1 part loamy soil with 1 part grit.

Loamy soil is typically soft and dark, consisting of a mixture of organic matter, clay and gritty material such as coarse sand. Commercially available potting mix can also be used.

Grit refers to materials like coarse sand, pumice and LECA, which open up the soil and improve drainage. To give your edibles a boost, add an organic fertiliser to your soil mix before planting. Follow the application rate recommended by the manufacturer.



Scan the QR code for a tutorial video on mixing soil for growing edible plants on our NParksSG YouTube channel, or visit go.gov.sg/soil-2

2. Choose suitable plants

One of the keys to a successful and thriving allotment garden is choosing plants that have care requirements which match your gardening schedule.



Scan the QR code to learn more about choosing suitable edible plants in our **Horticultural Best Practices for Edible Gardening** guide, or visit go.gov.sg/gardening-resources

Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots

3. Plant up your garden



To start growing your edibles, sow the seeds directly into the plot or germinate them first in seedling trays.

Once the seedlings have formed two or three pairs of leaves, they can be transplanted into their final planting space.



Scan the QR code for a tutorial video on how to start seedlings on our NParksSG YouTube channel, or visit go.gov.sg/seedlings



Plants with a clumping growth habit such as Pandan and Lemongrass are commonly propagated by division. You can divide the whole plant into several clusters which will subsequently form new plants.



Scan the QR code for a tutorial video on how to propagate herbs and spices (by division) on our NParksSG YouTube channel, or visit go.gov.sg/herb-division

Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots



Herbs such as mint and basil can be propagated easily via stem cutting.



Cut a healthy stem from the plant and remove the leaves from the lowest two nodes (where the leaves emerge) from the cutting. Place the stem in water for about two weeks until it produces roots.



The rooted cuttings can be planted into soil once the roots reach at least 5 cm in length.



Scan the QR code for a tutorial video on how to propagate mint and basil on our NParksSG YouTube channel, or visit go.gov.sg/propagate-herbs

Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots

4. Care for your plants

Watering

Different plants have different watering requirements. Edibles generally require more watering than ornamentals.

How do you know if your plants need watering?

Insert your finger 2.5 to 5 cm into the soil to feel if it is moist to the touch. If your finger comes out clean, the soil is most likely dry and needs watering.



Fertilising

Nutrients in the soil will deplete over time, especially when growing edibles. For optimal growth, fertilisers should be added regularly to replenish lost nutrients. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when applying fertilisers. It is generally best to apply small but frequent amounts.

There are three essential nutrients which are important for healthy plant growth:

Nitrogen (N): Promotes the growth of leaves and should be added every 10 to 14 days for leafy edibles.

Phosphorous (P): Promotes flowering and early seed formation and should be added once a month for fruiting vegetables before they start flowering.

Potassium (K): Promotes fruiting and should be added once a month for fruiting vegetables.

Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots

5. Manage pests and diseases

You may encounter pests and diseases that can cause plant damage. Practise a combination of simple yet environmentally-friendly and affordable Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies to prevent pests and diseases in your allotment garden.



Scan the QR code to learn about 10 common pests and diseases of edible plants, or visit go.gov.sg/plant-pests

Mechanical Control



Barriers, such as netting, can be placed over the plants to physically keep pests out. These should be installed neatly and securely for easy maintenance.

Cultural Control

Check for pests regularly. Remove and dispose of infected plant parts properly and promptly in sealed bags away from the garden. Destroy weeds which may be reservoirs for pathogens. It is also good to clean your gardening tools and equipment frequently to prevent pests from spreading to uninfected plants.

Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots

6. Harvest your edible plants



To ensure the safe growing of edibles in your allotment garden plot, always sanitise your tools before and after harvesting.



Harvest your edibles once they mature to avoid over-ripening and rotting. They can attract pests and diseases to other plants if left neglected.



When harvesting your edibles, avoid coming into direct contact with the soil. Wash your harvested edibles thoroughly with clean water before eating to remove any surface contaminants.



Scan the QR code for recipes to transform harvested edibles into delicious dishes for the family on our NParksSG YouTube channel, or visit [go.gov.sg/recipes](https://www.go.gov.sg/recipes)

Growing Edibles in Allotment Garden Plots

Optional: Build a trellis for edible climbers



Edible climbers such as long beans and bitter gourds will need support in the form of a trellis. When building trellises for an allotment garden plot, it is important to ensure that the materials used are strong and sturdy.

Some suggested trellis materials are:

- Garden stakes
- Sturdy plastic netting
- PVC pipes



Scan the QR code for a tutorial video on how to build a simple trellis on our NParksSG YouTube channel, or visit go.gov.sg/diy-trellis

Suitable Edible Plants to Grow

Below is a list of suggested edible plants for consideration.

Symbols



Prefers full shade



Prefers semi-shade



Prefers full sun



Requires little water



Requires a moderate amount of water



Requires a lot of water

Leafy Vegetables

Leafy vegetables need a minimum of 4 to 6 hours of direct sunlight a day and daily watering. They usually require more maintenance and are thus more suitable for gardeners who are able to come to the plot daily.



Bayam

Amaranthus tricolor



Cai Xin

Brassica chinensis var. *parachinensis*



Kang Kong

Ipomoea aquatica



Suitable Edible Plants to Grow



Kailan

Brassica oleracea
(Alboglabra Group)



Kale

Brassica oleracea



Lettuce

Lactuca sativa



Okinawa Spinach

Gynura bicolor



Sweet Potato

Ipomoea batatas



Ulam Raja

Cosmos caudatus



Suitable Edible Plants to Grow

Fruiting Vegetables

Fruiting vegetables need a minimum of 4 to 6 hours of direct sunlight a day and regular fertilising.



Brinjal

Solanum melongena



Chilli

Capsicum annuum



Lady's-Finger

Abelmoschus esculentus



Long Bean

Vigna unguiculata



Tomato

Solanum lycopersicum



Suitable Edible Plants to Grow

Herbs and Spices

Most herbs and spices are non-woody (herbaceous) plants that require at least 4 hours of filtered sunlight with regular fertilising.



Basil

Ocimum basilicum



Cekur

Kaempferia galanga



Chives

Allium tuberosum



Cincau

Platostoma palustre



Indian Borage

Coleus amboinicus



Suitable Edible Plants to Grow



Laksa

Persicaria odorata



Mint

Mentha spp.



Oyster Plant

Tradescantia spathacea



Pandan

Pandanus amaryllifolius



Saw Tooth Coriander

Eryngium foetidum



Turmeric

Curcuma longa



Plants to Avoid Growing in your Plot

Due to the limited size of an allotment garden plot, growing large shrubs or fruit trees are not recommended as they may take up too much space in the plot, block sunlight from reaching your plot as well as neighbouring plots and grow too tall over time making it difficult to harvest safely. Some plants may shed a lot of leaves, which would require regular clearing from paths.

Here are some plants to avoid growing within your allotment garden. Note that this list is not exhaustive.

Thorny Plants



Bougainvillea



Lime

Fruit Trees



Moringa



Mulberry

Plants With a Messy Growth Form



Sugar Cane



Banana

Examples of Well-Maintained Plots

Here are some examples of plots that exemplify good allotment gardening practices. Not only are these plots neat, safe and enhance the aesthetics of the area, they are prolific and in turn can produce a bountiful harvest.

Example Plot 1:

Trellis and shade netting structures are kept to 1 m in height and have a simple cuboid design for easy maintenance.



Example Plot 2:

All plants and structures are kept within the plot and the passageway is kept clear of debris and other gardening items.



Example Plot 3:

A good selection of plants is being grown, such as leafy vegetables, fruiting vegetables and herbs and spices. Small flowering plants have also been added to encourage pollinators.



Happy Gardening!



For information on more varieties of plants and their growth requirements, visit Flora & Fauna web at www.nparks.gov.sg/florafauanaweb



To find out more on community gardening, visit our website at www.nparks.gov.sg/cib



For more gardening resources and tips, visit go.gov.sg/gardening-resources



To learn more about our City in Nature, scan the QR code or visit www.nparks.gov.sg/CityInNature



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