

About Community in Bloom

Community in Bloom (CIB) is a programme that was launched by the National Parks Board (NParks) in 2005. It aims to nurture a gardening culture among Singaporeans by encouraging and facilitating community gardening efforts. It is also an opportunity to build community bonds and strengthen social resilience in our City in Nature.



Share your love for nature and animals at
#NParksBuzz #AnimalBuzzSG

In support of:



For more information, visit our website at www.nparks.gov.sg/cib or email us at CommunityInBloom@nparks.gov.sg

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/about-us/city-in-nature



This brochure features 10 fruiting climbers that are commonly cultivated in Singapore. These are plants that naturally scramble to grow upwards or outwards and require a structure like a garden stake, netting or trellis to climb on.

We hope this brochure will encourage you to try growing these plants at home or in your community garden!

Know 10 Fruiting Climbers

What are Climbers?

Climbers are plants that produce long, flexible stems that twine around trellises or hook onto other plants for support.

Climbers take up little ground space and can be trained to grow on trellises, walls, fences, and other garden structures.

How do plants climb?

- Different climbers use different climbing strategies such as twining stems, spring-like tendrils, aerial roots, hooks, thorns and adhesive pads to hoist themselves up onto external support systems.
- Knowing the growing habit of your plant will help you understand the support system they require.

Choosing the right support for your climber

Climbers that produce light-weight fruits can be grown on simple structures such as a wall or teepee trellis, while climbers which produce heavy fruits should be grown on stronger structures such as an arch trellis.



Scan the QR code to watch our video guide on how to grow fruiting climbers and build a simple trellis

A **wall trellis** is typically placed against a wall for climbers with aerial roots, hooks or thorns to grow upwards on. Besides adding vertical greenery to your garden's landscape, a wall trellis also prevents root damage to your wall.



A **teepee trellis** can be anchored in garden soil or even in your plant pot. It is beneficial for climbers with spring-like tendrils or twining stems to cling onto for support as they grow.



An **arch trellis** is one of the bigger types of trellises, typically placed in a planter box or directly on your garden soil. The structure can support a larger number of climbers and is beneficial to climbers with spring-like tendrils or twining stems.



Bottle Gourd

Scientific Name
Lagenaria siceraria



Plant Characteristics

The Bottle Gourd is a herbaceous perennial climber that climbs with spring-like tendrils and twining stems. It takes about 5 to 7 days to germinate, and 60 to 90 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

Bottle Gourds grow best in soil that drains well. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires an arch trellis for support.

Uses

The young fruits and seeds of the Bottle Gourd are edible. Its fruit has a mild, dulcet taste and can be boiled, stir-fried or cooked in a stew. Interestingly, the dried, mature fruit can be used as a container, made into musical instruments or decorated and displayed as ornaments.

Difficulty Level
Intermediate

Smooth Loofah

Scientific Name
Luffa aegyptiaca



Plant Characteristics

The Smooth Loofah is a herbaceous annual climber that climbs with spring-like tendrils and can grow up to 15 m long. It takes 4 to 7 days to germinate, and 63 to 91 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Smooth Loofah grows well in fertile, loamy soil that drains well. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires an arch trellis for support.

Uses

The young fruits, leaves and flower buds of the Smooth Loofah are edible. Its fruit has a lightly sweet and mild taste similar to zucchini and is commonly eaten as a vegetable when boiled in soup or stew. Interestingly, the inedible mature fruit is extremely fibrous and bitter but can be dried and used as a natural exfoliator.

Difficulty Level
Easy

Common Pepper

Scientific Name
Piper nigrum



Plant Characteristics

The Common Pepper is a woody perennial climber that climbs with short aerial roots and can grow up to 4.5 m long. It takes 14 to 21 days to germinate, and 244 to 274 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Common Pepper grows best in moist, fertile, loamy soil that drains well. This plant thrives in both full sun and semi-shaded environments and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, stem cuttings, or runners and requires the support of a wall or teepee trellis.

Uses

The dried fruits of the Common Pepper, more commonly known as peppercorns, are edible. They have a peppery, piquant taste and can be used to flavour and preserve food.

Difficulty Level
Intermediate

Snake Gourd

Scientific Name
Trichosanthes anguina



Plant Characteristics

The Snake Gourd is a herbaceous annual climber that climbs with spring-like tendrils and can grow up to 6 m long. It takes about 7 days to germinate, and 49 to 105 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

Snake Gourds grow best in moist soil that drains well. Avoid growing them in dry or waterlogged soil. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires an arch trellis for support.

Uses

The immature fruits, young shoots and leaves of the Snake Gourd are edible. Its fruit has a lightly sweet, mild taste and is commonly boiled and eaten as a vegetable in curries or sambal.

Difficulty Level
Intermediate

Hyacinth Bean

Scientific Name
Lablab purpureus



Plant Characteristics

The Hyacinth Bean is a purplish herbaceous annual climber that climbs with trailing, twining stems and can grow up to 6 m long. It takes 5 days to germinate, and 75 to 300 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Hyacinth Bean grows best in heavy clay soil that drains well. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires a wall or teepee trellis for support.

Uses

The leaves, flowers, young fruits and immature seed pods of the Hyacinth Bean are edible and commonly eaten as a vegetable when boiled in curries and dhals.

Difficulty Level
Intermediate

Watermelon

Scientific Name
Citrullus lanatus



Plant Characteristics

The Watermelon is a herbaceous annual climber that climbs with spring-like tendrils and twining stems. It can grow up to 5 m long. It takes 5 to 12 days to germinate, and 147 to 182 days to produce mature fruits (depending on the variety grown).

Cultivation and Plant Care

Watermelons grow best in slightly acidic, fertile loamy soil that drains well. To prevent fruit rot, avoid growing it in places with high humidity and heavy rainfall. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires an arch trellis for support. Building a hammock-like structure on the trellis would be beneficial to hold the fruit as it develops.

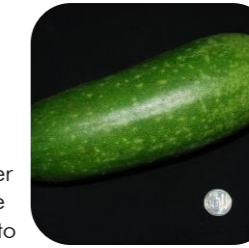
Uses

Watermelon is a commonly consumed fruit that is sweet and refreshing. It can be eaten raw, juiced, or incorporated into desserts.

Difficulty Level
Difficult

Marrow Green

Scientific Name
Cucurbita pepo



Plant Characteristics

The Marrow Green is a herbaceous annual climber that climbs with spring-like tendrils and can grow up to 15 m long. It takes 7 days to germinate, and 49 to 56 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Marrow Green grows best in soil that drains well. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires the support of an arch trellis.

Uses

The edible fruits of the Marrow Green has a mild flavour similar to a cucumber and is commonly eaten as a vegetable in soup or stew.

Difficulty Level
Intermediate

Sword Bean

Scientific Name
Canavalia gladiata



Plant Characteristics

The Sword Bean is a herbaceous perennial climber that climbs with trailing, twining stems and can grow up to 10 m long. The seeds germinate readily and it takes 150 to 300 days to produce mature fruits.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Sword Bean grows best in fertile, loamy soil that drains well. It thrives in both full sun and semi-shaded environments and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires a wall or teepee trellis for support.

Use

The stems, young leaves and pods of the Sword Bean are edible, and are commonly eaten as a vegetable when boiled or steamed. The seeds of the Sword Bean cannot be eaten raw as they contain a toxic protein. They are only safe to eat after they have been boiled three times, with the tough seed coat removed. Water used for detoxification must be changed between each boil.

Difficulty Level
Easy

Passion Fruit

Scientific Name
Passiflora edulis



Plant Characteristics

The Passion Fruit is a herbaceous perennial climber that climbs with spring-like tendrils and can grow up to 15 m long. It takes 14 to 28 days to germinate, and 60 to 90 days to produce mature fruits. This plant has a lifespan of 5 to 7 years but becomes less productive after its fifth year.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Passion Fruit grows best in fertile, loamy soil that drains well. This plant thrives in full sun and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, stem cuttings, grafting or air-layering and requires an arch or wall trellis for support.

Uses

The leaves, flowers and fruits of the Passion Fruit are edible. The pulp of the fruit is tart and sweet and can be eaten raw or used as flavouring for desserts and beverages.

Difficulty Level
Easy

Winged Bean

Scientific Name
Psophocarpus tetragonolobus



Plant Characteristics

The Winged Bean is a herbaceous perennial climber that is usually grown as an annual. It climbs with spring-like tendrils and twining stems and can grow up to 4 m long. It takes 5 to 7 days to germinate, and 70 to 84 days to produce mature seeds.

Cultivation and Plant Care

The Winged Bean grows best in dry soils or drought condition. Avoid growing it in acidic soils with a pH less than 5.5. It thrives in both full sun and semi-shaded environments and requires moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and requires a wall or teepee trellis for support.

Uses

Young shoots, leaves, flowers and immature seed pods of the Winged Bean are edible, and are commonly eaten raw or cooked as a vegetable. The flowers can also be used as a natural food dye in rice and pastries.

Difficulty Level
Easy