

Growing Windowsill Salad

Growing your own organic food is much easier and quicker than you think. All you need are a couple of recycled pots or a small patch of weed-free ground, and you'll soon be harvesting fresh produce with a tiny carbon footprint and no packaging involved.

Quick-growing salad will provide you with food on your plate in just a few weeks.

What you need

- Pots or containers (recycled containers work well)
- Salad seeds (e.g. lettuce, mustard, oriental salad, rocket)
- Compost (homemade or peat-free multi-purpose)

You can plant salad seeds anytime from **March-August**.

Method

1. Fill your container with peat-free compost. If you don't have any flowerpots or seed trays to hand a yogurt pot or fruit punnet, with holes punched in the bottom, works perfectly well.
2. Water the container and gently firm the compost down. Then sprinkle over your seed, don't worry too much about spacing as they are easy to thin out (remove any weaker seedlings) as they germinate.
3. Cover the seeds with a light sprinkling of compost and place in a sunny spot.
4. Water little and often, and turn the container if you find the seedlings are growing at an angle towards the light.
5. When the leaves are young but big enough to eat, harvest just what you need with a pair of scissors to make a clean cut of the outer leaves. The stems will grow new leaves, hence the name 'cut-and-come-again'.
6. Salad seeds can be sown continuously throughout the summer. Try sowing at weekly intervals to keep you in fresh leaves for months. This is called successional sowing.

Top tips

- With all quick-growing crops like salad, consistent watering is key. Watering little and often is best.
- If you're growing outdoors, watch out for slugs and use an organic slug control method if necessary.
- Harvest your salads frequently to prevent them from flowering, or 'bolting'.

