

# MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

## What is Making Space for Nature?

**What?** 'Making Space for Nature' includes weekly indoor and outdoor activities for you to enjoy engaging with the nature on your doorstep.

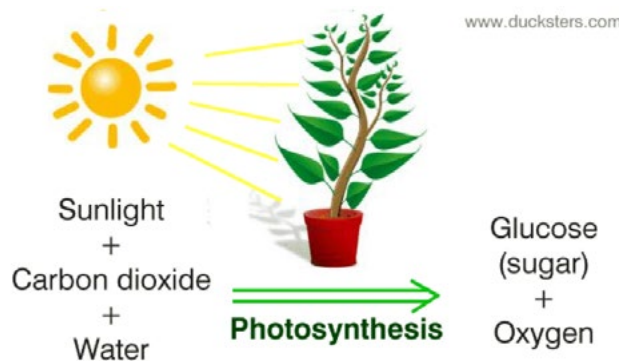
**Why?** 'Making Space for Nature' invites pupils to be part of the wonderful green spaces, waterways and lakes in their surrounding areas.

**How?** We invite you to join other school pupils to become part of Making Space for Nature's network of children exploring their own 'naturehood', sharing activities and entering our weekly competitions.

## Activity 7: Planting and Growing

#GetSetSow

Home grown food always tastes better and you're going to grow some! You can grow delicious fruit and vegetables almost anywhere, as long as they have light, water, warmth and nutrients – just what you need to grow and be healthy! Remember that plants take in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the air and give out oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>), which we need in order to breathe. This conversion process is called PHOTOSYNTHESIS. They also need regular sunlight and water. You will need to care for your plant ensuring it is given light and regular water.



If you don't have a garden, a balcony or windowsill will do. You don't necessarily need plants or seeds; you can even grow your own from food scraps! Choose plants that are tasty and you might like.

Did you know you can eat some flowers? These are edible nasturtiums which are delicious in salads (see page 5).

Watch these videos to -

- Learn how seeds germinate and grow: [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zb4rkqt](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zb4rkqt)
- Watch runner beans grow: [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zvpyprd](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zvpyprd)



# MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

## Activity 7: Planting and Growing

### Task 1: GO POTTY!

Before planting, pots at the ready! Have fun, reduce waste and save money by making pots from things you already have around the house. Remember to wash your pots in soapy water first. Decorate your boxes before you fill them with compost to make them unique! Decorate labels or lolly sticks with the names of the plant so you remember what's in your pot.

Proper drainage keeps your plant roots healthy, so make holes in every pot, no matter the size. Ask an adult to help you when you're carefully making drainage holes using scissors (or a hammer and nail for tin cans) and space the holes about 1cm apart. Proper drainage keeps your plant roots healthy. Pop a saucer or plate underneath to collect any excess water.

You can use these items for a range of pot sizes:

- Mini pots – yoghurt pots, plastic cups, plastic fruit punnets, tin cans or egg boxes (for starting seeds in)
- Medium pots – large tin cans or 4-pint milk bottles. Take a pen and draw a horizontal line around the bottle, about half-way down. Use scissors to cut along this line and dispose of the top half. Don't forget drainage holes! Use a hammer and nail to make holes in the can.
- Large pots – ice cream tub or 6-pint milk bottle. Take a pen and draw a horizontal line around the bottle 5cm from the top. Cut along the line with scissors. Cut drainage holes into the edges at the bottom.





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## Activity 7: Planting and Growing

### Task 2: Grow new produce from your kitchen scraps

Re-growing from leftover scraps and seeds that you would usually throw away is fun and a great way to save money! Read on to learn how to collect and sow seeds from fruit and vegetables, re-sprout your vegetable scraps or replant root vegetables and spices.

#### 1. Collecting and sowing fruit and vegetable seeds

Many of the fruits and vegetables that we get in the supermarket contain the seeds we need inside them to re-grow them in our gardens or on our windowsills. Here is a list of foods you can collect the seeds from and sow straight into compost in a recycled plant pot container.

- **Tomatoes**
- **Chilli Peppers**
- **Sweet Peppers**
- **Dried peas**
- **Dried beans**
- **Lemons**



- **Limes**
- **Strawberries** (the seeds can be found in the tiny holes on the skin of the fruit, just slice a section of skin and plant under 1cm of soil)

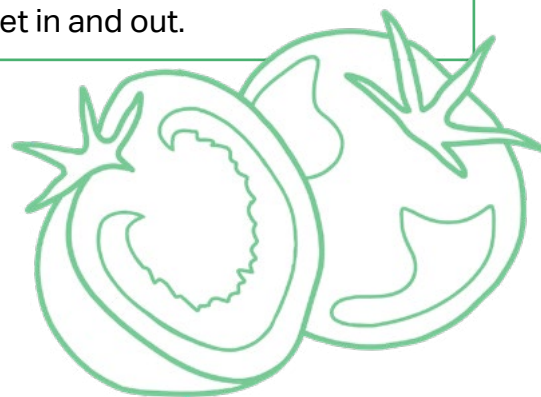
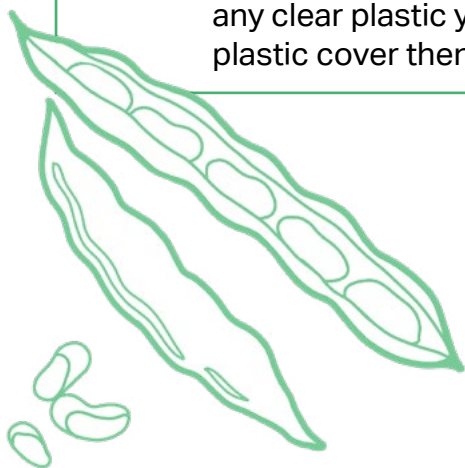
**Step 1** - Collect the seeds from your chosen fruit or vegetable.

**Step 2** - Fill a container with compost, leaving about 2cm space at the top to prevent overflowing when watering. To allow for drainage, use a container with holes in the bottom or add a 2cm layer of grit or pebbles before you fill with compost. Put your container on a saucer, plate or any lid that can collect the water as it drains out.

**Step 3** - Water until the compost is soaked right through to the bottom.

**Step 4** - Bury the seed in the compost at a depth of double its width (e.g. 2cm deep for a broad bean that is 1cm wide) and write the plant's name on the container.

**Step 5** - Find your planted seeds a home near a window! Cover your pot with clingfilm or any clear plastic you have lying around. Use string or an elastic band to secure the plastic cover then poke a few holes in to allow air to get in and out.



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## Activity 7: Planting and Growing



### 2. Re-sprouting vegetable scraps

Many of the kitchen scraps we usually throw away after making meals can actually be re-grown very easily. This can be done with all of the following vegetables:

- **Leeks**
- **Spring onions**
- **Celery**
- **Bulb fennel**
- **Lettuce, bok choi and other leafy greens**
- **Lemongrass**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Cabbage**

**Step 1** - Cut off a small section of the base of the bulb or stem of the vegetable. Some veg like spring onions will already have visible roots attached, but others will sprout them when placed in water or moist compost. Place these in either a container of compost or a shallow jar of water so the top of the stem is above the compost or water.

**Step 2** - Within a few days or a week, new green stems or leaves will emerge from the root. You can simply harvest the top of the stem or leaves with scissors whenever you want to cook with them or add them to a salad or sandwich. After each harvest, allow the stems or leaves to grow back again before harvesting. Replace the water every 3 days to keep it from going stagnant.

### 3. Re-planting root vegetable and spices

Fresh root vegetables and spices like ginger, turmeric and garlic can all be re-grown indoors to create beautiful edible houseplants. Ginger and turmeric are both tubers. This is a special type of fleshy root that can be re-planted in compost to grow new plants and more tubers for cooking and making tea with.

**Step 1** - Simply take your fresh ginger or turmeric root and bury it in a pot of compost so half of it is below the surface. For garlic, just bury a few large garlic cloves 2cm deep in the compost with the pointy end of the cloves upwards.

**Step 2** - Put the container next to a sunny window and water whenever the compost feels dry. Stems will emerge from the roots. The roots of ginger and turmeric can be harvested at the end of the summer. You can harvest the garlic stems from the base with scissors and use them in cooking and salads in the same way as a spring onion and they should re-grow after each harvest.



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## Activity 7: Planting and Growing

### 4. Edible Flowers - Nasturtiums

#### Step 1 - Sow your seeds

Make three equally spaced holes 1cm deep in your compost. Drop one seed into each and cover with compost. Be sure to water until moist!



#### Step 2 - Cover your seeds

Poke a few holes in clingfilm or a sandwich bag and cover your plants. You won't need to water your seeds much while they are covered. While your seeds are germinating they should live indoors in a sunny spot on a windowsill. Remove the plastic cover when you see green shoots emerging. Seeds sprout at different speeds so don't worry if some emerge after a few days and others a few weeks.

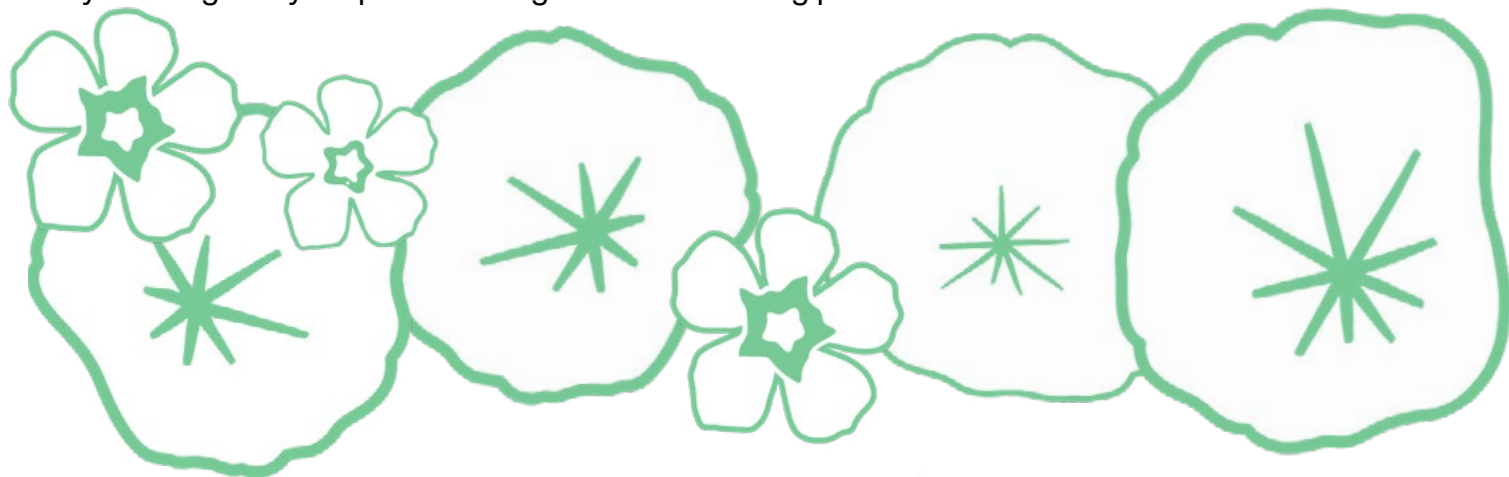
#### Step 3 - Potting On

Once your seedlings have sprouted and have their first leaves, pot on into a medium pot.

#### Step 4 - Harvesting

You can eat the leaves, flowers and seed pods! They have a delicious peppery taste similar to rocket; great in salad or blended into pesto. Pick no more than a third of the leaves and flowers at once and allow them to grow back after each harvest.

**Gardeners Tip!** Pollinators love nasturtiums; their nectar is food for bees and butterflies. Try building a tiny teepee with twigs for these trailing plants!



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### Task 3. My plant's weekly growth chart.

Track the growth of your plant by completing this chart weekly.

Write the name of the plant.

Using a ruler, measure your plant's weekly growth in height and note in the week columns.

Draw a picture weekly to show how it changes from a seed to a plant.

My first name					
Plant 1 Name:					
Height in centimetres					
Drawing					
Plant 2 Name:					
Height in centimetres					
Drawing					
Plant 3 Name:					
Height in centimetres					
Drawing					
Date	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5

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## Activity 7: Planting and Growing

**Well done – we hope you enjoyed ‘making space for nature’!**

Please send to your teacher:

- Photographs of your plants at different stages of growth
- Your completed chart on page 6

If you're interested in other nature activities, you'll find some here:

- [www.goingwild.net](http://www.goingwild.net)
- [www.facebook.com/goingwild/](https://www.facebook.com/goingwild/)
- [twitter.com/goingwildnet?lang=en-gb](https://twitter.com/goingwildnet?lang=en-gb)
- [action.wildlifetrusts.org/page/57739/petition/1](https://action.wildlifetrusts.org/page/57739/petition/1)
- [www.backyardnature.org/resources/](http://www.backyardnature.org/resources/)
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- [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/05/nature-activities-for-kids-to-do-at-home-part-6/](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/05/nature-activities-for-kids-to-do-at-home-part-6/)