



Square Foot Gardening

There are many methods when it comes to designing and laying out a garden, but we have found that Square Foot Gardening works very well for raised beds. The Square Foot Gardening (SFG) method was developed in the late 1970's by Mel Bartholomew, who was looking for a way to produce more food in less space. SFG is a simple method that uses blocks instead of the traditional rows when planting. The garden bed is divided up into a grid, and a different type of plant can be put in each square foot block. The number of seeds or plants in each square depends on how big the plant gets, and how much space it needs to develop properly.

Making a Grid

A grid is what makes a Square Foot Garden. Mark off each foot along the four sides of your raised bed using a tape measure, then connect the marks to form a grid. How you connect them is a matter of preference, you could use nails and string, sticks, old blinds, or simply draw lines in the soil.



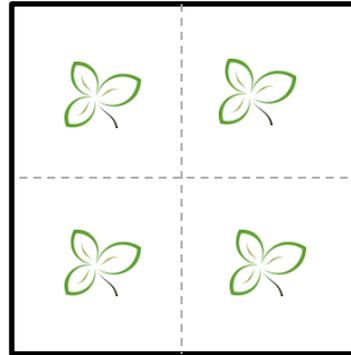
Spacing Guidelines

You can use the seed or plant spacing found on seed packets to determine appropriate SFG spacing for different types of plants. Imagine or draw a smaller grid to evenly space the seeds or plants within a block. Here are four general guidelines:

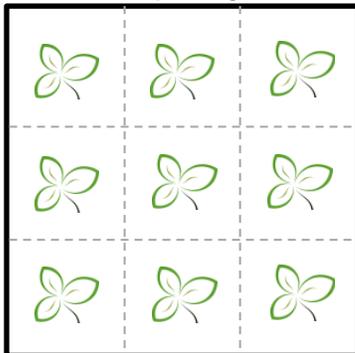
Extra Large: One per square for 12-inch spacing



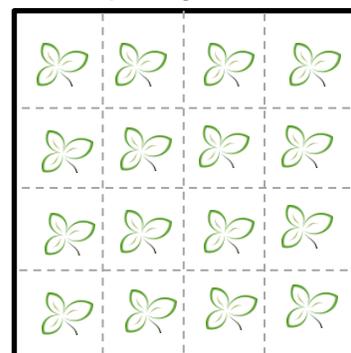
Large: 4 per square for 6-inch spacing



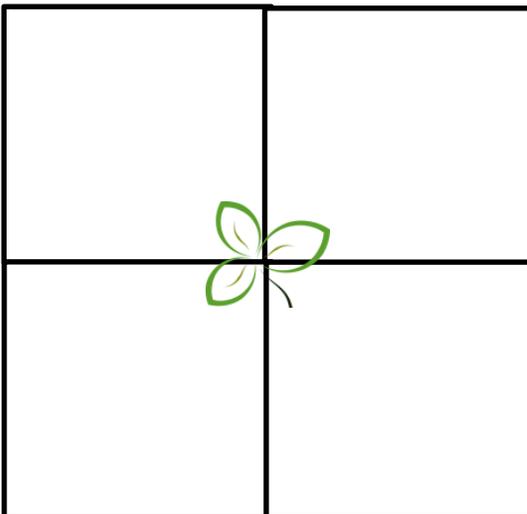
Medium: Nine per square for 4-inch spacing



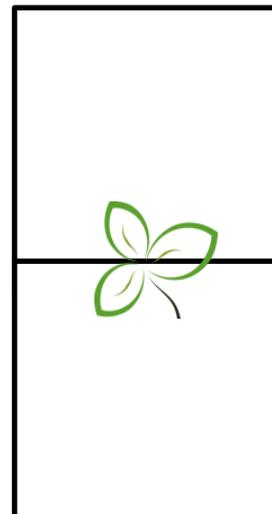
Small: 16 per square for 3-inch spacing



Oversize: One per 2x2 ft or 4 squares for 24-inch spacing



One per 1x2 ft or 2 squares



Square Foot Planting Chart

For quick reference, use this chart to determine plant spacing.

| Plant | Number per square foot | Plant Height |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Basil | 2 (or plant alongside tomatoes) | Medium |
| Beans- Bush | 9 | Medium |
| Beans- Pole | 8, with trellis | Tall |
| Beets | 16 | Short |
| Broccoli | 1 | Medium |
| Butternut Squash | 1 per 2 square feet | Medium (tall if trellised) |
| Cabbage | 1 | Medium |
| Carrots | 16 | Short |
| Collards | 1 | Medium |
| Chives | 2 | Medium |
| Chamomile | 4 | Short |
| Cilantro | 9 | Short |
| Cucumbers | 2 | Short (tall if trellised) |
| Dill | 4 | Medium |
| Eggplant | 1 | Medium |
| Garlic | 16 | Medium |
| Flowers, various | 2-4 | Medium to Tall |
| Kale | 1 | Medium |
| Lavender | 1 | Medium |
| Lettuce | 4 | Short |
| Lettuce salad mix | Scatter lightly | Short |
| Melons | 1 per 2 square feet | Medium (tall if trellised) |
| Mustard Greens | 9 | Medium |
| Okra | 1 | Tall |
| Onions | 9 | Short |

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Oregano | 2 | Short |
| Parsley | 2 | Short |
| Peas | 8, with trellis | Tall |
| Peppers | 1 | Medium |
| Radishes | 16 | Short |
| Scallions | 4 bunches | Short |
| Spinach | 9 | Short |
| Summer squash, zucchini | 1 per 3'x3' block | Medium |
| Sweet Potatoes | 1 | Short (tall if trellised) |
| Swiss chard | 2 | Medium |
| Tomatoes | 1 per 2'x2' block | Tall |

Planning Your Garden

Before starting to plant, it's valuable to make a plan for your garden. Planning helps you use your garden space effectively, buy or grow only what you need, and make sure you have space for everything.

Steps to Plan Your Square Food Garden

1. **Make a list of all the things you want to grow.**
2. **Determine how many plants of each type to plant per square foot, and the plants' height** (short, medium, or tall). Use the Square Foot Planting Chart to find this information.
3. **Mark the north side of your raised bed** on your Raised Bed Grid. (Use a compass or look at street on a map to determine which direction is north).
4. **Fill in the squares on your grid, according to plant height.** Write plants that are marked as short into the squares on the south side of your garden, plants that are of medium height into the center squares, and tall plants into the squares on the north side. (This planning keeps the taller plants from shading shorter plants).
5. **If you're going to use a trellis, mark where it will go.** A trellis should go on the north or west side of the bed. Put climbing plants, such as pole beans, cucumbers or peas at the base of the trellis.
6. **Write how many individual plants can be planted in each square on the garden plan,** next to the name of the plant (example: 4 plants for lettuce, 16 for beets).
7. **Determine Planting Dates.** Do this by writing out the dates for when you can plant each crop (using the date ranges from a Crop Planting Calendar). You may want to write the dates out sequentially after you're finished, so you have a schedule.

Sample Garden Plan

----- T r e l l i s -----

| | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| | 1' | 2' | 3' | 4' | 5' | |
| 1' | Peas (8) Mid-March | Peas (8) | Pole Beans (8) Mid-May | Pole Beans (8) | Pole Beans (8) |  North |
| 2 | | | | | Dill (4) Mid-May | |
| 3' | Tomato (1) Mid-May | | Tomato (1) | | Basil (2) Mid-May | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Kale (1) Mid-March | Kale (1) | Kale (1) | Collards (1) Mid-March | Collards (1) |
| Pepper (1) Mid-May | Pepper (1) | Pepper (1) | Spinach (9) Mid-March | Spinach (9) |
| Cucumber (2) Early-May | Cucumber (2) | Radishes (16) Late-March | Beets (16) Late-March | Parsley (2) Early-March |

**Also include border plantings of flowers, and/or nearby pots of herbs.*