

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.

This is an intensive method of planting, so the nutrients in the soil will be consumed more quickly. Keep the soil fertile with 1 - 2" of compost every year. (See page 51)

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 draw lines in the soil or use nails and string, sticks or old blinds.



Spacing Guidelines

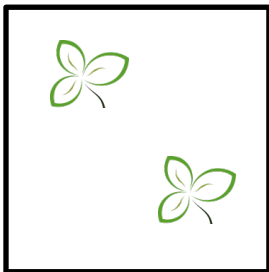
You can use the seed or plant spacing found on seed packets to determine appropriate SFG spacing for different types of plants. Imagine or draw a smaller grid to evenly space the seeds or plants within a block.

Here are general guidelines:

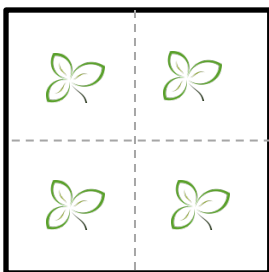
- 1 per square for 12" spacing



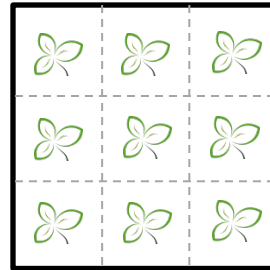
- 2 per square for 9" spacing



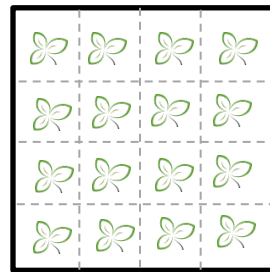
- 4 per square for 6" spacing



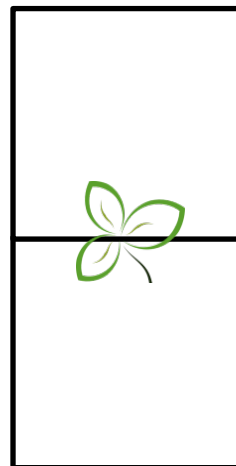
- 9 per square for 4" spacing



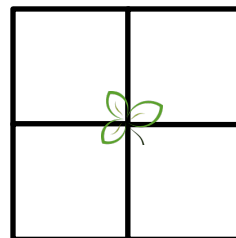
- 16 per square for 3" spacing



- 1 per 2 squares or 1 x 2 feet



- 1 per 4 squares 2 x 2 feet or for 24" spacing



SQUARE FOOT PLANTING CHART

Use this chart to determine plant spacing. You may choose to adjust the spacing based on your experiences. A few plants need more than one square foot for a single plant, as they grow quite large.

PLANT	PLANTS PER SQUARE FOOT	PLANT HEIGHT
Basil	2 (or plant alongside tomatoes)	Medium
Bean-Bush	9	Medium
Bean-Pole	8, with trellis	Tall
Beet	9	Short
Broccoli	1	Medium
Cabbage	1	Medium
Carrot	9	Short
Collards	1	Medium
Chives	2	Medium
Chamomile	4	Short
Cilantro	9	Short
Cucumber	2	Short (tall if trellised)
Dill	4	Medium
Eggplant	1	Medium
Garlic	9	Medium
Flowers, various	2 - 4	Medium to Tall
Kale	1	Medium
Lavender	1	Medium
Lettuce	4	Short
Lettuce Salad Mix	Scatter lightly	Short
Melon	1 per 1' x 2' block	Medium (tall if trellised)
Mustard Greens	9	Medium
Okra	1	Tall

PLANT	PLANTS PER SQUARE FOOT	PLANT HEIGHT
Onion	9	Short
Oregano	1	Short
Parsley	2	Short
Pea	8, with trellis	Tall
Pepper	1	Medium
Radish	16	Short
Scallions	4 bunches	Short
Spinach	9	Short
Summer Squash / Zucchini	1 per 3' x 3' block	Medium
Sweet Potato	1	Short (tall if trellised)
Swiss Chard	1	Medium
Tomatoes	1 per 2' x 2' block	Tall
Winter Squash / Butternut	1 per 1' x 2' block	Medium (tall if trellised)

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 Foot Garden

1. Make a list of what 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 the Planting Calendar on page 16). You may want to write the dates out sequentially after you're finished, so you have a schedule.

SAMPLE GARDEN PLAN

	1'	2'	3'	4'	5'	
1'	Tomato (1) Mid-May		Tomato (1)		Parsley (2) Late March or later	↑ North
2'					Basil (2) Mid-May	
3'	Pepper (1) Mid-May	Pepper (1)	Spinach (9) Mid-March	Spinach (9)	Basil (2) Mid-May	

----- Trellis -----

*		*	Cucumber (2) Mid-May	Cucumber (2)
Zucchini (1) Mid-May			Collards (1) Late March or later	Collards (1)
* * *	* * *	* * *	Kale (1) Late March or later	Kale (1)

*= flower, can put flowers or small herbs in corners or border of the zucchini space

Include flowers and herbs planted in pots or around your yard to attract beneficial insects. (See page 30 for a list)