Garden Planning Cards

*Make efficient use of space with square foot gardening and optimize growing conditions with companion planting.*

These cards provide spacing recommendations for using the square foot gardening planting method, as well as information on companion planting, care*, and harvest for a variety of common garden vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

These cards can be used in tandem with the *Square Foot Gardening and Companion Planting* Lesson Plan from the Natural History Museum of L.A. County.

*Note that information on care is specific to growing in the climate of Southern California.*

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

Descanso Gardens
**Garden Planning Cards**

**Beets (Beet Family)**

**Spacing:** 9 beets per square foot. Divide your square into 9 smaller squares and plant 1 seed in the middle of each square at ½” depth.

**Companions:** Lettuce, chard, onions, kohlrabi

**Care:** Beets like lots of sun, but can grown in some shade as well. Plant seeds October – February at the latest.

**Harvest:** Beets will be ready about 8 weeks after planting.
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Radishes (Cabbage Family)

**Spacing:** 16 radishes per square foot. Divide your square into 16 smaller squares and plant 1 seed in the middle of each square at ½” depth.

**Companions:** Lettuce, peas, nasturtiums

**Care:** Radishes will grow in sun with some shade and they like plenty of water. Plant seeds October – May.

**Harvest:** Radishes will be ready about 4 weeks after planting.
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Carrots (Carrot Family)

**Spacing:** 16 carrots per square foot. Divide your square into 16 smaller squares and plant 1 seed in the middle of each square at ¼ – ½” depth.

**Companions:** Lettuce, radishes, peas, onions, herbs, tomatoes, nasturtiums

**Care:** Carrots grow well with lots of sun or partial shade. Plant seeds October – March. They can do okay in the summer if planted in a shady area.

**Harvest:** Carrots will be ready 70 – 80 days after planting.
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Peas (Legume Family)

**Spacing:** 4 pea plants per square foot. Divide your square into 4 smaller squares and plant 1 seed in the middle of each square at 1 – 1½” depth.

**Companions:** Carrots, radishes, peas, nasturtiums

**Care:** Peas climb up, so they should be trellised. They require plenty of sun. Plant October – March.

**Harvest:** Peas will be ready about 10 weeks after planting.
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Swiss Chard (Beet Family)

**Spacing:** 1 chard per square foot. Plant seeds at ¼ – ½” depth.

**Companions:** Peas, root crops, lettuce, celery

**Care:** Chard requires plenty of water and likes some shade. Plant year round.

**Harvest:** Chard will be ready about 8 weeks after planting.
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Spinach (Beet Family)

Spacing: 9 spinach plants per square foot. Divide your square into 9 smaller squares and place 1 seed/seedling in the middle of each square at ½” depth.

Companions: Peas, nasturtiums, other greens

Care: Spinach will grow in sun to partial shade. Plant October – March.

Harvest: Spinach will be ready in about 6 weeks.
Kale (Cabbage Family)

**Spacing:** 1 kale plant per square foot. Plant seeds at ¼ – ½” depth.

**Companions:** Beans, beets, lettuce, nasturtiums

**Care:** Kale will grow in sun to partial shade. Plant October-March.

**Harvest:** Kale will be ready in about 10 weeks.
**Garden Planning Cards**

**Lettuce (Lettuce Family)**

**Spacing:** 2 lettuce plants per square foot. Transplant seedlings 6” apart near the center of the square.

**Companions:** Carrots, radishes, nasturtiums, calendula, onions, peas, corn, beets. *Do not plant near parsley.*

**Care:** Lettuce requires sun to partial shade and plenty of water. Start seeds indoors and transplant October – March.

**Harvest:** Lettuce heads will be ready about 65-70 days after seeding. If planting loose leaf lettuce, it can be harvested when leaves are about 4” long.
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Broccoli (Cabbage Family)

Spacing: 1 broccoli plant per square foot. The plants can grow 2 – 3 feet tall.

Companions: Beets, onions, nasturtiums

Care: Broccoli will tolerate full sun. Start indoors and transplant October – March.

Harvest: Harvest broccoli before the heads flower, when the buds of the head are firm and tight.
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Parsnips (Carrot Family)

**Spacing:** 16 parsnips per square foot. Divide your square into 16 smaller squares and plant 1 seed in the middle of each square at ½” depth.

**Companions:** Parsley, peas, beans, radishes, garlic

**Care:** Parsnips will grow in full sun to partial shade. Plant October-March.

**Harvest:** Parsnips will be ready about 16 weeks after planting.
Garden Planning Cards

Parsley (Carrot Family)

**Spacing:** 2 parsley plants per square foot. Plant seeds 6” apart near the center of the square at ¼” depth.

**Companions:** Carrots, nasturtiums

**Care:** Parsley will grow in sun to partial shade. Plant year round.

**Harvest:** When the stems have three or more leaf clusters, parsley is ready to be harvested.
**Celery (Carrot Family)**

**Spacing:** 1 celery plant per square foot.

**Companions:** Carrots, radishes, beets

**Care:** Celery will grow in sun to partial shade and requires plenty of water. Start indoors and transplant October – January.

**Harvest:** Harvest stalks starting with the outermost. You may begin harvesting when stalks are about 8 inches tall.
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Nasturtium (Cabbage Family)

**Spacing:** 1 nasturtium per square foot. Plant 1 seed in the middle of each square at ½” depth.

**Companions:** All plants. Nasturtiums deter harmful insects and attract helpful pollinators.

**Care:** Nasturtiums will grow in full sun to partial shade. Plant September – March.

**Harvest:** The flower is edible with a peppery taste.
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Shallots (Onion Family)

**Spacing:** 12 shallots per square foot. Divide your square into 12 smaller squares and place 1 bulb (root-end down) in the middle of each square.

**Companions:** Cabbage family, beets, carrots, strawberries

**Care:** Shallots grow best with plenty of sun and water. Plant November-February.

**Harvest:** Harvest after 90 – 120 days, when the leaves have turned brown and fallen over.
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Calendula (Daisy Family)

Spacing: 2 calendula plants per square foot. Plant seeds 6” apart near the center of the square at ¼” depth.

Companions: All plants. They deter harmful insects and attract helpful pollinators.

Care: Calendula like sun to partial shade. To produce more blooms, remove the dead flowers. Plant October – May.
Garlic (Onion Family)

**Spacing:** 9 plants per square foot. Divide your square into 9 smaller squares and place 1 clove (pointed-end up, root-end down) in the middle of each square at 2” depth.

**Companions:** Cabbage family, beets, carrots, strawberries, spinach, eggplant, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers. *Do not plant near peas or beans.*

**Care:** Garlic likes sun and plenty of water. Plant October – December.

**Harvest:** Harvest after 5 – 7 months, when the leaves have turned brown and fallen over.
**Garden Planning Cards**

**Kohlrabi (Cabbage Family)**

**Spacing:** 1 kohlrabi per square foot.

**Companions:** Onions, beets, fragrant herbs

**Care:** Start indoors and transplant seedlings in full sun September – March.

**Harvest:** Most varieties are ready for harvesting 6 – 7 weeks after planting and are the most tender and flavorful when the bulbs are 2 – 4” in diameter.
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Bulb Onions (Onion Family)

**Spacing:** 4 per square foot. Divide your square into 4 smaller squares and plant 1 set or transplant in the middle of each square.

**Companions:** Carrots, cabbage family, lettuce, parsnips, tomatoes, most herbs. *Don’t plant near peas or beans.*

**Care:** Plant in full sun, October – April.

**Harvest:** Harvest after 60 – 80 days when the leaves have turned brown and fallen over. If planting from seed, harvest after 100 – 120 days.
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Tomatoes (Nightshade Family)

**Spacing:** 1 tomato plant per square foot, but they may prefer 18 – 24” of space.

**Companions:** Onions, parsley, basil, carrots, nasturtiums.
*Do not plant near potatoes, cabbage or corn.*

**Care:** Tomatoes require full sun and support from cages or trellises. Start indoors and transplant seedlings late March – June.

**Harvest:** When tomatoes are in full color, they are ready to be picked (60 – 100 or more days after transplanting).
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Tomatillos (Nightshade Family)

**Spacing:** 1 tomatillo plant per square foot, but they may prefer 18 – 24” of space.

**Companions:** Onions, parsley, basil, carrots, nasturtiums.  
*Do not plant near potatoes, cabbage or corn.*

**Care:** Tomatillos require full sun and support from cages or trellises. Start indoors and transplant seedlings late March – June.

**Harvest:** When the papery husk surrounding the fruit turns from green to tan and begins to split, tomatillos are ready for harvest (65 – 85 days after transplanting).
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Brussels Sprouts (Cabbage Family)

**Spacing:** 1 per square foot. Transplant seedling in center of square.

**Companions:** Celery, beets, onions, nasturtiums

**Care:** Plant in full sun, October – January.

**Harvest:** Brussels sprouts are ready to harvest when the heads are firm, green, and 1 – 2” in diameter.
Cucumbers (Gourd Family)

**Spacing:** 1 per square foot. Transplant seedling in center of square.

**Companions:** Beans, corn, radishes, sunflowers, nasturtiums. *Do not plant near potatoes or aromatic herbs.*

**Care:** Cucumbers require full sun and a trellis to climb.

**Harvest:** After 55 – 65 days, fruit will be 4 – 5” long and ready for harvest.
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**Eggplant (Nightshade Family)**

**Spacing:** Plant 1 eggplant seedling per square foot.

**Companions:** Beans, peppers, tomatoes, spinach, nasturtiums

**Care:** Eggplants require full sun and plenty of water. Plants may require staking for support. Start indoors and transplant March – June.

**Harvest:** Skin should be glossy and thin at time of harvest, 65 – 80 days after transplanting.
Garden Planning Cards

Basil (Mint Family)

**Spacing:** 4 basil plants per square. Divide your square into 4 smaller squares and plant one seedling in the middle of each square. For large plants, plant 1 seedling per square.

**Companions:** Tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, nasturtiums, calendula

**Care:** Basil requires full sun and warmth. Transplant seedlings outdoors after danger of frost has passed, April – June. Remove flowers to encourage more leaf growth.

**Harvest:** Use scissors to cut leaves as needed.
Peppers (Nightshade Family)

**Spacing:** Plant 1 seedling per square foot.

**Companions:** Garlic, onions, eggplant, basil

**Care:** Peppers like plenty of sun and well-drained soil.
Transplant April – June.

**Harvest:** Sweet peppers will mature in 2 – 3 months, while hot peppers may take 5 months.