



SOWING SEEDS INDOORS

While many short-lived plants can be sown outside in the garden, sowing seeds under cover gives plants an earlier start and often produces better results. Seeds can be sown in pots in a greenhouse, in a cold frame (a box with a glazed lid), or on a sunny windowsill.

YOU WILL NEED

- seed packets, eg nasturtium, pansies, chrysanthemum, or love-in-a-mist
- seed-sowing compost
- 9cm (3½in) plant pots
- watering can with fine sprayhead
- small tray
- plant labels
- waterproof pen



LABEL YOUR POTS

Always write a label for your seeds using a waterproof pen. Include the name of the plant and the date of sowing so that you don't forget. It can be fun at the end of the season to collect seeds for free from the garden.



Buy a fine low-nutrient compost to grow seeds

1 Fill a clean or new 9cm (3½in) pot with a good-quality seed-sowing compost, leaving a 2–3cm (¾–1½in) gap beneath the rim of the pot. Firm the compost gently to create an even surface for the seeds.



2 Using a watering can with a fine sprayhead, dampen the compost, being careful not to disturb it by splashing too much. Alternatively, stand the pots in a tray of water until the surface is moist, then remove to allow them to drain off.



3 Sow seed evenly but don't over sow as pricking out excess seedlings will be difficult. A couple of large seeds per pot or a light sprinkling of small seeds is enough, covered with a fine layer of compost if instructed on the seed packet.



4 When the seeds have developed and produced a few sets of leaves, get them accustomed to being outdoors by placing the pots outside during the day for a few weeks. You can then plant them out in the garden.

