

TOP TIP

02

Grow fragrant sweet peas

WITH MONTY DON



Sweet Peas – the best of all the annual climbers.

A packet of seed, costing less than a small perennial plant, will make scores if not hundreds of flowering annuals, most of which grow easily and reliably.



There is no point in growing a sweet pea that does not smell sweetly, so avoid most modern varieties and stick to reliably scented plants like the Spencer group.

Sweet peas grow very well up trellis or netting, or in a pot up a wigwam of canes. If planted at the base of a wall they will need lots of water. They also like the richest soil possible. If you pick the flowers regularly (every 8-10 days) to keep them from setting seed and therefore not flowering, then they will flower into autumn.

- Sow in autumn or spring
- Flowers from June to October

If you want some annuals for cut flowers – and who does not? – plan for it by:

- making extra sure of feeding sweet peas to encourage vigorous plants with large flowers and long stems
- thinning them slightly less than normal, but cutting them selectively to thin them out throughout the flowering season
- sowing two or three successive 'crops', starting in March and ending at the end of May to give a supply right until the autumn



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