

MITREPLAN PROJECT PLANNER

Plant a healthy vegetable garden



- **An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a perfect result.**
- **Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.**
- **Includes a materials checklist.**

PLEASE NOTE:

Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is worth your time to read all steps thoroughly first to be sure you understand what is required.

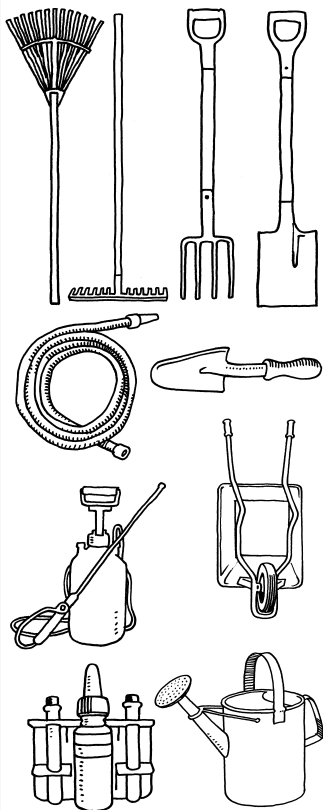
Mitre 10 is proudly Australian owned.

#50

mitre10.com.au

MIGHTY HELPFUL™ MITRE 10

TOOLS FOR THE JOB



Soil pH test kit

Digging fork

Spade and shovel

Metal garden rake

Plastic rake

Wheelbarrow

Garden hose and fittings

Watering can

Spray equipment

✓ MIGHTY HELPFUL CHECKLIST

	ORDER
Garden lime	
Mulch	
Compost	
Fertilisers	
Weedkillers	
Insecticides/pesticides (as required)	
Agi pipe, scoria or small stones (if drainage required)	
Seeds or seedlings	
Peat moss or vermiculite (if rasing from seed)	
Seed raising mix	

Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.

Step 6: Rotate Crops

Next year, when preparing new beds, it is important to rotate your crops to ensure healthier plants and to eliminate many annual pest and disease problems. Rotation simply means not growing the same group of crops in the same bed year after year. For rotation purposes, crops can be divided into three main groups:

Leafy Greens: cauliflower, cabbage, spinach, silver-beet, lettuce, brussel sprout, tomato

Root Crops: parsnip, potato, carrot, beetroot, turnip, onion or leek

Legumes: peas and beans

So, as an example, in Row 1 the first year, you might plant cabbage, etc. The following year, you substitute it with parsnip, etc. The next year you do the same and plant tomatoes. And the fourth year, return to planting cabbage, etc.

Grow your own vegies for freshness and flavour – with a little help from Mitre 10.

Whether it's luscious sun-ripened tomatoes, a crisp lettuce, a handful of baby carrots or simply sprigs of herbs, there's something particularly satisfying about growing your own vegetables.

It's the pleasure of knowing you've produced it yourself and that you can't put anything fresher or tastier on the dinner table than home grown.

You don't need to be a full-time farmer, either, to grow a basket of fresh vitamin-filled goodies. But, as with all plants, your results will only be really good if you provide the right conditions and care.

So if you follow the basic guidelines in this MitrePlan, you should be well rewarded with a bountiful crop.

Step 1: Locate your plot

All vegetables need plenty of sunshine. Morning sun is ideal, so find a spot with an easterly aspect. They also need protection from strong winds, particularly during extremes of summer weather, so provide a wind break on the westerly side if possible. Locate away from large trees, too. Tree roots can steal moisture and nutrients from the growing area. It should also be located close to the house for practical reasons so you can easily pop out and pick what you need fresh off the plant. If you have young children or pets, you may need to fence it off in some way to protect the soil and crops from small feet or digging animals. Birds can be deterred with hawk kites, tying empty supermarket bags to the fence or to stakes, or by stringing pieces of aluminium foil among rows. "Keep Off" repellent is also available from most Mitre 10 stores which you spray around the perimeter of the plot to discourage cats, dogs and birds.

Step 2: Preparation

The secret to successful vegetable growing is in the soil preparation. Most suburban soils haven't the essential nutrients needed. So it is important your soil be well prepared and nutrients added at least 4-5 weeks in advance of planting crops. Start by removing any debris or weeds and grasses by hand or with weedkillers. Then dig over the soil to a depth of about 30cm. With a pH Soil Test Kit, check the soil's acid or alkaline ("sour" or "sweet") level – too acid or too alkaline restricts nutrients uptake in the soil. If you prefer, your Mitre 10 store may do this testing for you if you take them soil samples from four to six different spots in the plot. If the pH reading is below 6.0, apply garden lime at the rate of about 1-2 cups per square metre (250-500gms per square metre), water in, and leave for 7-10 days. Check the pH again – a reading of 6.5 is ideal. If the soil is rather heavy and tends to hold water after rain, try raising the beds by mounding them.

Excess water will drain away. Dig in well-rotted compost or one of the many soil additives or animal manures available to a depth of 8cms to achieve a light crumbly soil type. Finally, rake level, leaving a fine tilth of soil in which to sow seeds or plant seedlings.

Step 3: What to grow

Australia has many climatic zones (Fig. 1) and the range of variances is very wide. This handy guide shows you what popular vegetables can be grown when, depending on the zone you live in.

Step 4: Planting

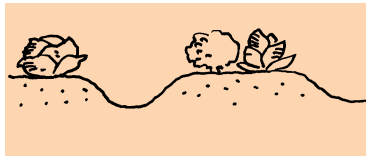
Most vegetables can be purchased as seedlings. Planted or sown rows should run north/south to ensure all plants receive maximum sunlight and minimal shading, with at least 50cm between rows to allow for a walkway and use of a wheelbarrow. If growing suitable vegetable species from seed, follow step 2 and bring the soil to a fine tilth 4-5 weeks before planting. Add a complete fertiliser such as Gro-Plus Complete, applying approx. 100gms per square metre.



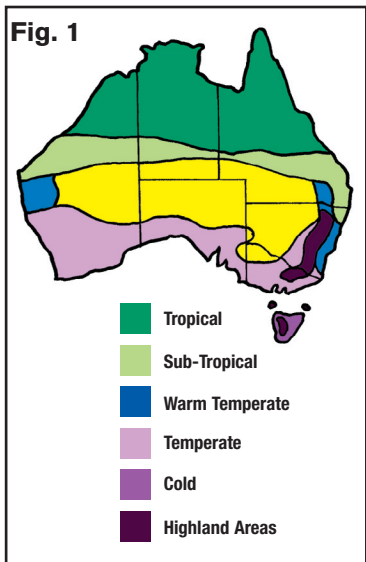
A summer vegetable garden can have a variety of vegetables.



Keep the seedlings well spaced to give them room to grow.



In winter raise garden bed to help drainage.



Rake lightly into the soil, then water in well. Make a furrow for the seeds and plant according to the instructions on the seed pack. Most packs provide information on seed spacing, depth to sow, and sowing times for climatic regions. Then cover the seeds with a light covering of friable soil to the depth recommended on the seed package.

Step 5: After-Care

Water is important to vegetables for them to reach full size and flavour. A good deep watering is preferable to short shallow watering. Check the soil regularly and keep moist.

Feeding

Vegetables require regular doses of either organic or artificial fertilisers to generate growth, especially in nutrient poor soils. Animal manures or Blood and Bone combined with regular applications of liquid fertilisers such as Aquasol or Thrive encourage healthy crops.

Organic Fertilisers include garden compost, Blood and Bone, Bone Dust and animal manures. They release nutrients slowly to the soil and help to improve soil structure and retain moisture. They are not readily leached through the soil by watering or rain. Green manure crops, such as peas and beans (legumes) also improve soil condition and fertility when dug back into the soil after cropping. Artificial or inorganic fertilisers are made from naturally occurring minerals and provide nutrients in a concentrated form. Generally, plants respond quite rapidly to these fertilisers, but they are easily leached through soil by watering or rain.

Pest and Disease

A whole range of insects and diseases can feed on or infect vegetables but these can be controlled to a large extent with insecticides and pesticides (refer MitrePlan #49 Control common garden pests). If using any spray for insect or disease control, always check the withholding period applicable on the container. This is the time between the last spray and the harvest date and ensures there will be no harmful chemical residue.

However, prevention through good garden hygiene is the best strategy. Remove weeds by hand or with a garden hoe. Or use mulch to suppress weed growth. Inspect plants regularly for any little leaf chewing insects or disease symptoms and dispose of any spent crops that may be diseased.

Companion Planting

A great way to protect your plants from pests and diseases and to have herbs for the kitchen is to use companion plants. These are plants that when planted with other plants in a group help each other to grow or deters pests and diseases. Not all plants grow together well though. For example Broad Beans do not like to be planted with onions yet when planted with cabbages and other leafy crops they, and their companions, thrive. Use the Vegetable Planting Guide to select a suitable companion plant for your vegetables.

Vegetable	Tropical				Sub Tropical				Temperate				Cold				Companion Plants
	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	
Asparagus			Y				Y				Y				Y		Tomatoes, parsley, basil beans dwarf
Beans, Dwarf		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	Potatoes, cucumbers, sweet corn, strawberries, celery, summer savory
Beans, Climbing		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y			L	Sweet corn, summer savory
Beans, Broad			Y			L	Y			L	Y			L	L		Potatoes, cucumbers, sweet corn, strawberries, celery, summer savory
Beetroot		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	E	L	Y	Y	E		Y	Onions, kohlrabi
Broccoli		Y	Y	E	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y			L	Onions, leeks, rosemary, celery, rosemary
Brussel Sprouts									Y	E			Y			Y	Sage, thyme, rosemary, potatoes
Cabbage		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E		Y	Potatoes, celery, dill, chamomile, sage, mint, rosemary, beetroot
Capsicum	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E		Y	E			Y				Y	Nasturtiums, tomatoes, silverbeet
Carrots		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	E	L	Y	Y			Y	Peas, lettuce, chives, onions, leeks, rosemary, sage, tomatoes
Cauliflower	L	E			L	E			Y	E			Y				Pennyroyal, sage, thyme, onions
Celery	Y	E			Y	E		L	Y	E		Y			L	E	Leeks, tomatoes, French beans, cauliflower, cabbage
Cucumber	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E		Y	Y			L	E			L	Beans, sweet corn, peas, radishes, sunflowers
Leeks			Y		L	Y	E		Y	Y		Y	Y	E		L	Onions, celery, carrots
Lettuce	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carrots, radishes, strawberries, cucumbers
Onions		L	E			L	E			L	Y			L	Y		Beetroot, strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce, summer savory, chamomile
Onions, Spring	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E	Y	Y	Y	E	Y	Cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots
Parsnip		Y	Y		L	Y	Y	E	Y	E	L	Y	Y	E		Y	Lettuce, chives, shallots
Peas (Dwarf)		L	Y			L	Y			Y	Y				Y	E	Carrots, turnips, radishes, cucumbers, sweet corn, beans
Peas (Climbing)		L	Y			L	Y			Y	Y				Y	E	Carrots, turnips, radishes, cucumbers, sweet corn, beans
Potatoes		Y	Y	E	L	Y	Y	E		E		E	E			Y	Beans, sweet corn, cabbage, horseradish, marigold, eggplant
Pumpkin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y			Y	E			L	E	Sweet corn
Radish	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	Peas, nasturtiums, lettuce, cucumbers
Shallots	L	Y	E			Y	E			Y	E		L	Y	E		Cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli
Silver Beet	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E	L	Y	Y		L	Y	Onion family, parsnip, beetroot
Spinach	Y	Y		Y	E		Y			Y	E			Y	Y		Strawberries
Squash	Y	Y	Y	Y	L	E	L	Y	E			L	E			L	Nasturtiums, sweet corn
Swedes		Y				Y			L	E			L	E		E	
Sweet Corn	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E		Y	Y			L	Y			L	Potatoes, peas, broad beans, cucumbers, squash, pumpkins
Tomato	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	E			Y	E			L	Chives, onions, parsley, asparagus, marigolds, nasturtiums, carrots

Legend Y = Yes OK to plant all season E = Plant early in the season L = Plant late in the season Blank Space = Not a good time to plant

MIGHTY HELPFUL HINTS TO MAKE THE JOB EASIER

■ Seeds should not be sown too deeply – sow about twice the depth of the seed's own thickness.

■ A dull showery day or the late afternoon are the best times to transplant seedlings.

■ Keep taller plants on the south side of any bed to avoid shading other vegetables.



When sowing seeds make a "drill" using a straight stick. Press it lightly into the soil to the depth required for sowing.



Sow the seed sparingly in the drill. Once the seedlings grow, thin them out in the row or transplant them into prepared beds to the distances specified on the seed pack.

IMPORTANT:

Not all Mitre 10 stores have a garden centre.

Mitre 10 gratefully acknowledges the assistance of

**Mr Robert McMillan,
SDH, Cert Public Parks Hort
(Scotland), Dip TT, and
Mr Ronald Barrow,
Dip Hort Sci, Cert Sprinkler
Design, DTT, MAIH**

in the preparation of this MitrePlan.

Plant a healthy vegetable garden



IMPORTANT: This project planner has been produced to provide basic information and our experienced staff are available to answer any questions you may have. However, this information is provided for use on the understanding that Mitre 10 is not liable for any loss or damage which is suffered or incurred (including but not limited to indirect or consequential loss), for any personal injury or damage to property suffered or sustained as a result of using the information contained in this MitrePlan Project Planner. Mitre 10 advises you to call in a qualified tradesperson, such as an electrician or plumber, where expert services are required, and to independently assess any safety precautions that will need to be followed prior to using the information in this MitrePlan Project Planner.

WARNING: There may be by laws or regulations of councils or other statutory bodies that you must comply with when following this MitrePlan Project Planner.

Your local MITRE 10 Store is: