Growing Carrots

growing

Spring/Autumn/Winter vegetable

grow your own grub

image sourced from www.thinkvegetables.co.uk.

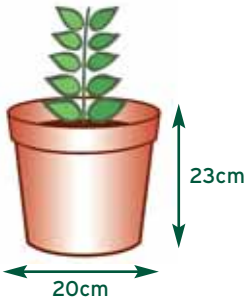
'tasty food from tiny spaces'

Carrots are easy to grow and are great to eat as quick snacks or to use in cooking. You can start growing carrots from April to June.

If you only have a small space outside to grow vegetables you can buy seeds for small, round carrots that are quick to grow and only need small pots or a window box. These carrots are also fun for children to grow and eat as snacks.

You can grow small round carrots (garden centres or seed companies will sell these seeds) in:

- A pot, window box or any container with holes in the bottom – minimum size 20cm wide and 23cm deep. You can fit about four 'clumps' of carrots in a pot this size. If the pot is bigger you can fit more clumps in as long as there is about 12cm between each clump.



If you have more room you can grow bigger carrots in taller pots or containers and see how long they will grow!

You can grow bigger carrots in:

- Pots or any container with holes in the bottom – minimum size 30cm wide and 30cm deep. You can fit about four 'clumps' of carrots in a pot this size. If the pot is bigger you can fit more clumps in as long as there is about 12cm between each clump.

Carrots will need some sun during the day and some protection from strong winds.

Sowing Seeds

When carrots are grown from seeds they grow in 'clumps', each clump of carrots needs to be planted about 12cm apart.

- From April to June fill your pot or window box with peat free multipurpose compost leaving a space of 8cm from the top.
- Put about 7 seeds in a group on top of the soil leave at least 12cm between each group of seeds.
- Cover the seeds very lightly with a little more soil and give the seeds a little water.
- Put your label in the pot with the name of the seed on it and the date that you sowed them.

Water your plants enough so that the soil is always moist especially in hot weather. Keep your carrots free of weeds. As your carrots grow put some more soil up around the carrot tops if they start to turn green.

Your carrots should be ready 10 – 12 weeks after sowing. You can eat them at any size but if they grow to more than 2.5 cm wide they may be tough. (continued overleaf)

Carrots • Carrots • Carrots • Carrots • Carrots • Carrots • Carrots • Carrots

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Harvesting

Water the soil before you harvest your carrots. Above the ground you will see the green feathery carrot tops. You can pull these to get the carrot roots out but sometimes they break off. To get your carrots out of the ground it is best to put a small fork or trowel into the ground near to the roots and lift them up. Pull one up first to test the size.

Eating Carrots

eating

5 A DAY

Just Eat More
(fruit & veg)

3 heaped tablespoons of fresh carrots count as 1 portion.

In season May - October

Preparation

Your carrots will be covered with soil when you pull them out the ground. You will need to scrub or scrape them to get the soil off. If they are very mucky you can take the outer skin off with a peeler. Because a lot of nutrients are below the skin try not to peel too much skin off. You can store carrots in the fridge for up to 7 days.

How can I use my carrots?

Carrots need to be peeled or scrubbed and have the top and bottom cut off using a sharp knife. Wash carrots before cutting them into the shape/size you want. Carrots are delicious when eaten raw – cut into strips as a snack or grate and add to salads or sandwiches.
Carrots can be cooked and eaten as a vegetable or added to soups, stews, casseroles or stir-fry's.

Carrot Cake

Ingredients

- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 3 eggs (lightly beaten)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 cups peeled, grated carrots
- ½ cup crushed tinned pineapple (well drained)
- 4 dessertspoons sultanas
- 1½ cups self-raising flour
- 1 cup wholemeal self-raising flour
- 2 teaspoons ground mixed spice

Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C/ Gas Mark 4.
2. Grease and line an 8-inch cake tin.
3. Beat oil, eggs and sugar together in a large mixing bowl until light and creamy.
4. Add the carrots and pineapple.
5. Mix the flour and spice together. Using a metal spoon, gently fold into the other ingredients until just combined. Pour the mixture evenly into the prepared tin.
6. Bake for 45 minutes or until cooked throughout.

Serving Suggestion

Leave to cool. Serve dusted with icing sugar if desired.

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