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i INFORMATION SHEET

Carrot crop sheet

These are our top tips on how to grow carrots. They are tasty vegetables that can be grown in both spring and summer terms.

School term: Late Spring, Early Summer, Late Summer

Level of experience: No experience needed

Subject(s): Science

Sowing

When: March to July

1. Prepare the soil by removing as many stones as you can where you would like the carrots to grow.
2. Make a drill (channel) in the soil 2cm deep, using a **measurement stick** or bamboo cane to keep it straight.
3. Taking a pinch of seeds at a time, sprinkle them along the drill evenly and thinly until you have continuous row of seeds.
4. Cover the seeds with soil and firm the soil with the back of a trowel before watering them, taking care not to disturb the soil too much.
5. Label the row, then make another drill 20cm away and do the same again.



Growing

- When the seedlings are about 4cm tall, thin them out carefully so that there is about 5cm between each one.
- When they are growing or disturbed (for example, from thinning) carrots attract a pest called carrot fly. This fly can only fly up to 50cm off of the ground so you can grow carrots in raised beds, build a barrier taller than 50cm around your crop or grow a more resistant variety (with some that aren't as resistant growing nearby to attract the flies away from your main crop).

Varieties to try

- 'Parmex' - a short-rooted carrot with round root
- Flyaway - has sweet orange roots and a good resistance to carrot fly
- 'Purple Haze' F1 - produces smooth, heavy roots with deep purple skins and orange cores

Harvesting

When: 12 to 14 weeks after sowing

- After 12 weeks, the carrots should be a decent size for cooking and eating. Generally smaller carrots are more tender and sweeter than those that are larger.
- Water the soil well to make pulling the roots easier.
- Use a fork to loosen the soil to one side of the carrot plant, then gently pull up the roots.
- Leaving them in the ground until you need them is a good way to store carrots and extend the amount of time you have them available.

Using

- Orange carrots can be used to make a natural orange dye.
- Save the tops of your carrots to grow leaves and seeds by using our **Saucer Veg** activity.