



Plant a Herb Garden



Herbs are fantastic plants; they are valuable in cooking and have a superb scent. They are beneficial for a range of insects and the flowers of herbs have different colours which look fantastic!

Herbs have been planted since the dawn of time. There are many ways to make a herb garden, from the traditional to using a container on the patio, and there are lots of different herbs to choose from. You could first buy some from your supermarket and plant the ones you like. Below are some ideas and essentials before you start:



- * It is a good idea to plant as near to the kitchen door as possible as you will be more likely to use the herbs.
- * Choose a sunny location.
- * Make sure the planting area has good drainage; herbs do not like wet soil. The soil does not need to be fertile. Fertile soil means lots of foliage with little flavour.
- * Growing herbs from seeds will be cheaper than buying plants. Both can be purchased from garden centres. You could also try cuttings or get your friends or neighbours to share their herb plants with you.

Here are different ways to design a herb garden:

- * Measure an area and divide into 4 small compartments.
- * A small separate area in the middle would be a good place to plant a feature plant such as a bay tree.
- * The areas could be divided up using bricks, flagstones or hedging with lavender or rosemary in a box.
- * Tall herbs should be planted at the back with small herbs at the front.
- * Herbs could also be planted within the vegetable garden or as part of the flower beds and borders.
- * There are special containers to plant a variety of herbs in, or you could use any container, window box or hanging basket.

Plants to use in the garden

- * **Annuals** – These plants will flower for one season and then die - basil, chervil, coriander and dill are annuals.
- * **Biennials** – They live for two seasons; flowering in the second year. Parsley is a biennial.
- * **Perennials** – They can be used for many years and include mint, chives, fennel and thyme.
- * **Plants to use with good scent** – lavender, rosemary, curry plant and basil.
- * **Plants you can make herbal tea with** – mint varieties and chamomile.
- * **Plants attractive to bees and butterflies** – Hyssop, thyme, chives, borage, lavender, marjoram

Thank you to Peter Dowse of Bollington, Cheshire for sharing this great activity.