

Grow-your-own vegetables & flowers.

How to.. sow seeds, grow veg, avoid weeds, remove slugs, harvest on time and prepare a delicious organic lunch

- Find a suitable patch in your garden, clear any weeds and roots, till the soil and mix with compost (after creating your own*). You can place a raised wooden border (or planks) around this (especially if you have raised the soil)
- Visit a local garden centre, supermarket or DIY store and select your seed packets (check when you need to sow the seeds and make sure it's not too late) – or order online.
- Sow the seeds in small pots with soil or peat free compost in. Put the pots in your window sill or greenhouse. Water them daily and wait until the seeds have germinated and the plants are about 10-15 cm tall. Many plants will need to be hardened off – they need to go into a greenhouse before planting outdoors (see <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=386>). Never over-water plants.
- Move the seedlings from the pots into your garden. Space them out carefully. Place sticks with the names of the vegetables or herbs next to each plant so you don't mix them up!
- Water every day when there is no rain, ideally early in the morning or at night (so the water doesn't evaporate in the heat). Don't over water (except for runner beans). Look out for slugs and snails at night and remove or snip them with scissors (or use eco-friendly snail pellets! The ones with insecticides kill other, harmless creatures too)
- Watch your plants grow and wait until your crops are plump and big enough to harvest. With green beans: create a cane 'wigwam' and let the bean stalks wind themselves round the canes. Top tip for salad and herbs: just cut the leaves off with scissors and wait until they have grown back and you can harvest some more!
- Wash and cut up your veg. Look up food recipes online for: courgette bakes and soups, roasted tomato lasagne, green bean stew, broccoli tarts, all sorts of salads and, if you have grown fruit, add yoghurt or ice cream or bake a fruit pie! [Recipes - BBC Good Food](#)





How to build and use a compost heap:

- **Buy a (subsidised) compost bin (e.g. from the council*) and place it in your garden.**
- **Add your (plant-based) waste (don't add bones or meat leftovers, to avoid rodents). Layer your compost: fresh kitchen waste ('green') with 'brown' layers of grass clippings, leaves, straw, newspaper, cardboard and egg boxes.**
- **Worms will come and inhabit your compost bin and do the composting for you. You can stir occasionally or add water in dry weather.**
- **Open the 'door' at the bottom and take out your compost once ready.**
- **Sprinkle the compost onto the topsoil of your vegetable patch (after removing roots, stones and weeds from the soil). Mix the two and let the compost sink in and break down further before you start planting.**
- **You can add more compost at a later point or wait until you grow more veg the following year. You can leave dead vegetable plants at the end of the season – plough leaves etc back into the soil (but take out any roots). Especially bean leaves are great sources of nutrients such as nitrogen.**

***www.getcomposting.com**





**How healthy and 'creepy' is your soil?
Do the 'creepy crawly sock test'!**

If you want to check how healthy your soil is, bury a thin (not too dirty) cotton sock, handkerchief or (clean!) underwear.

Dig it up again after two weeks. Are there holes in it? Fantastic! It means that your soil is healthy, good for soil creatures and fab for growing vegetables. Is your sock, hanky or underwear still completely intact? Oh dear! Maybe you should throw some extra compost on your soil and sneak in some worms 😊

TIP: You can repeat this experiment in different places in your garden and write down where it is teeming with life and where it is more like a 'desert'. Also look for soil bugs in each spot and draw and describe what you see! Can you see a connection between the holes in your socks or underwear and the variety of soil life you can find in each place?



Cooking, baking and eating together is fun and healthy! What kind of dishes do you like to make? You can also check what kind of (traditional) dishes are popular in your region. Or you can look up dishes from Yorkshire or Ecuador, if you want to stick with Christy's adventures! Cook and bake for your family or neighbours, your church, your sports club or your friends.

RE: Did you know that meals often feature in bible stories? Think of Jesus eating with Zacchaeus (see also Lesson 13), the picnic by the lake (with Jesus multiplying fish and bread), and Jesus' last meal with his twelve friends, the disciples, just before he died.

Discuss: Why do you think eating together is so good and important? What kind of things do you like to talk about at the table?

Create your own memory game! Take pictures of your class as you do the eco-activities from this resource: growing vegetables, exploring, baking, nature scavenger hunts and walks, arts and crafts. Take photos of animals, trees, plants and fruit and vegetables. Make your game and play it in groups of 2-4.