



Photography © Ray Spence

# Chard

People have been eating chard for centuries. It often features in 'Top Ten' lists of healthy vegetables, but is rarely seen in the shops. The stalks can grow as wide as 4cm, and gold, fluorescent pink, ruby, orange, and white in colour! The leaves are a glossy dark green.

Chard can be harvested over a long period, if grown in a good-sized container, and kept watered. Sowing just 3-4 times could keep you supplied all year. It will also survive outside in most weather, but will need protecting in the colder months.



give it a grow



Leaves and stems are eaten. To use, cut stems just above ground level, leaving the younger ones. Chop them and braise in a little butter, adding the chopped leaves after a few minutes. Chard goes well with tomatoes, coconut, smoked fish and is a good substitute for spinach or 'greens'. Leaves strengthen in flavour with age.

Pot size – 20cm deep, with about 20cm x 20cm space for each plant. Bigger pots will give bigger plants.



## Varieties - All have green leaves.

Some to try:

- Bright Lights, Rainbow: a range of stem colours
- Oriole orange, Yellow, Ruby – stem colour as variety name suggests
- Swiss – wide white stems

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## Growing tips

Sow in late summer or early autumn in a warm, light spot. The later the sowing, the slower the growth. Plants will grow slowly over winter if kept indoors in a cool light place, or covered with a cloche.

**Compost to use:** Multipurpose, organic and peat-free.

**Watering tips:** Don't let pots dry out, but remember that plants need less water as growth slows down in cool weather.

**Support:** None needed

**Protection:** None needed

**Feeding:** Use a general liquid feed after a couple of months growing.

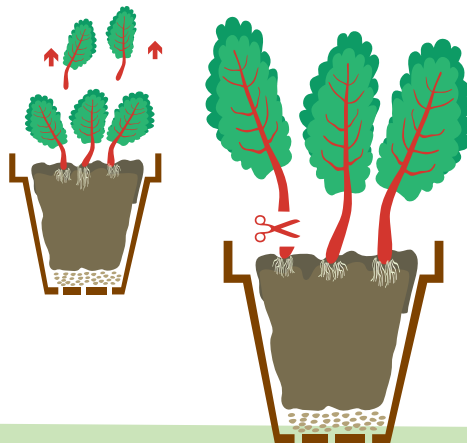
### Plant



1. Fill container with moist compost and firm gently.
2. Sow 20cm apart, 2-3 seeds together at each spot, 1cm deep.
3. Cover with a 0.5cm layer of compost.
4. If you have bought plants, plant at 20cm x 20cm.
5. Water well.

### Grow

When they are 2-3cm tall, carefully snip off excess seedlings, leaving one at each position. You can leave 2 or 3 seedlings to grow together, but the plants will be smaller.



### Eat

Harvest outer stems and leaves when large enough to use – about 8-10 weeks after sowing. Cut stems just above ground level. Leave the younger leaves to grow on. You should be able to harvest the plants over a month or two.

	Winter		Spring			Summer			Autumn				Winter		
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Nov	Dec	Jan
Sow indoors															
Sow outdoors															
Harvest															
Protect from the cold															

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