

IMPORTANT CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Please read this guide thoroughly upon receipt. For any more information please contact us via the details on your dispatch note enclosed

Dear Valued Customer,

Thank you for your order. This guide contains all the basic information you'll need to plant and care for your plants when they arrive. There's a full and up-to-date guide on our website, complete with videos, downloadable pdfs and a handy glossary of terms. Item specific instructions can be found on the relevant product pages on our website too.

Happy Gardening!
Peter McDermott, Head Gardener



Important: What to do on receipt of your order

Please unpack your order and check all of the contents carefully. **If there is anything wrong with your order or if you have any questions about it, please get in touch as soon as possible, via the contact details on your dispatch note.**

Don't worry if the outer packaging is damaged. Our packaging is specially designed to be able to protect the plants inside and most plants are much tougher than they look!

Sometimes we split orders as some items can't travel together. You should have everything that is listed on your **Dispatch Note** – if not, get in touch. In many cases plants are wrapped together, so please **completely unpack and double check everything** before you call.

We recommend planting as soon as possible after receipt. **If you can't plant your plants straight away**, potted plants can be kept in their pots for 2-3 weeks without issue, as long as they're kept in a bright spot, well-watered and frost-free. For all other items, please see the relevant section of this guide.

We recommend that you have these items:

- Compost for potting or mixing with garden soil
- Fertiliser to add when planting, for strong root growth
- Small pots or propagator kits for growing on plug plants
- A tree planting kit if you have ordered trees

Most plants are fine to be stored for a week before planting – ensure you keep the roots or compost moist – let us know **now if you need anything and we'll dispatch it ASAP!**

Give your plants a thorough watering on receipt, to help them recover from their short journey.

Select an appropriate planting spot with enough room for your plants to grow. You can find the height and spread of a plant on the product page on our website, or in our catalogue.

One type of our carefully designed packaging solutions. Guaranteed to protect your plants in transit.



'Grow Your Own' Fruit & Vegetables



To get the very best out of your fruit and veg plants, please read these planting instructions...

Fruit Trees & Bushes

Allow 2.5m (8ft) planting space between fruit trees for optimum growth and performance. If growing in limited space, you can prune to the size you need. Typically, allow smaller fruit bushes 1-1.5m of space. Specific height & spread info can be found on the product page on our website, or in our catalogue.

Fruit production is dependent on many factors, such as soil conditions, weather, the age of the tree and pollination by insects. As your plants establish over the coming years, your yields will improve.

When your plants start to produce flower buds, ensure to water them well and feed them with a high-potash feed such as our Blooming Fast Superior Plant Food.

Most of our fruit trees are self-fertile, while some require a pollinator plant nearby to produce fruit. Check the product page on our website for more info.

Most fruit trees and bushes will produce fruit every year – dependent on conditions. It is common for stone fruits to take a little longer than other trees to establish and these will typically produce flowers and fruit every two or three years.

Even if you have lots of flowers, you still need them to be pollinated by insects before fruit can be produced. You can help by using an artist's paintbrush to brush pollen from flower to flower, mimicking a pollinating insect, or you may just prefer to let nature take its course.

We advise keeping the foliage of peaches and nectarines as dry as possible to avoid Leaf Curl, particularly in autumn and winter. Moving to a sheltered spot – a carport, garage, or greenhouse – is best.

Raspberry & Blackberry Canes

Plant 60cm (2ft) apart in rows, along a wall, or in a border and support with canes. They can also be grown in large pots (40cm+ diameter), putting 3-5 canes around the edges.

Cut back summer fruiting raspberries (inc. long canes) in autumn after fruiting. Leave new canes for next year as fruit is produced on year-old growth. For autumn fruiting primocane varieties, cut back last year's growth in July after fruiting. Leave new growth to fruit in autumn and again the following June-July.

Prune blackberries in spring. Canes grow one season and produce fruit the next season, then die back – at which point you should cut back old growth to just above ground level.

Blueberries

Plant blueberries into pots rather than directly into your garden. They require acidic soil so use ericaceous compost or feed regularly with ericaceous feed.

Strawberries

Supplied either as "runners" (small bare-root plants); "trayplants" (with a root ball of compost); or in small pots. Plant as soon as possible on receipt, soaking runners in water for 2 hours prior to planting.

Plant in the ground, tubs or pots, or in grow bags, approx. 20-25cm apart in rows, or one plant per medium-sized pot.

Make sure strawberries are well-watered – particularly in dry springs and when in flower.

They'll crop in the first summer after planting – as little as 60 days depending on the time of year – and annually for around 4 years afterwards.

Each plant throws out more runners in summer – cut these off, so the plants focus energy into fruit production.

Citrus Trees (e.g. Oranges, Lemons & Limes)

Feed with high-potash feed when flowers appear, to help set and swell more fruits

Grow in large, well-drained pots, in the sunniest part of your garden, conservatory or orangery.

The varieties we supply will survive very short exposure to temperatures as low as -5°C, however exposure to sustained cold weather will kill them. In winter, move your trees to somewhere warmer – ideally somewhere with light, and above 10°C. If moving them into your home in winter, take care with central heating as this will dry them out considerably.

Water well and feed in summer with citrus feed as they are sensitive to minor nutrient deficiencies. They can be "temperamental" when the temperature, light or humidity changes rapidly and can shed a few leaves or fruitlets quickly. Do not worry, this is quite normal – they are robust trees and will recover.

Citrus trees can produce flowers and fruit simultaneously. Fruit can take a full 12 months from setting to harvest, so be patient. It is natural for plants to set a lot of fruitlets, many of which will drop off. The plant will select the strongest few to sustain to harvest.

Potatoes

On receipt, stand seed potatoes in an egg box in a cool, light room so they can begin chitting (shooting). Leave for 3-4 weeks, and short dark shoots (chits) will emerge. Take care not to damage these when handling or planting.

To plant using our planting kits, put 10cm of good compost on the bottom of each pot, then place 6 tubers of each variety spaced out evenly on top. Add a further 10cm or so of compost to cover and firm down, adding a sprinkling of Potato Fertiliser. If you are planting direct into garden soil, dig a trench about 20cm deep, mix some Potato Fertiliser into the soil, then plant tubers in the bottom. In both cases, water in well.

After a month or so, leaves will emerge from the top of the compost. Add sufficient compost to bury these leaves and a little more, then leave them to grow again. Repeat this until the pots are full, then allow them to grow for a further 5-6 weeks. For potatoes grown in the ground, "earth up" by covering them as the leaves grow, building up into a ridge about 20cm above ground level. The more stem you cover with soil, the heavier the crop will be.

Water and feed all potatoes well when they are in leaf as this will have a major increase in crop yield.

Harvest maincrop varieties when the leaves die back and earlies after about 10 weeks. Simply empty the bucket out and collect your crops or, if you've planted them in the ground, just dig them up!



Your fruit tree will arrive like this (above) between Nov - Mar. Keep them in wrapper for up to a week, if you cannot plant them straight away



Trees, Shrubs and Roses

To get the very best out of your plants, please read these planting instructions...

We sell a wide variety of trees and shrubs. "Evergreens" keep their leaves all year round. "Deciduous" plants will be dormant throughout autumn and winter, so they may arrive without leaves, or with the leaves looking blotchy or dying back. Do not worry – this is completely normal and you should plant them with confidence. Many deciduous plants are supplied as dormant bare-roots in autumn and winter (see below).

HOW TO PLANT



Dig a hole twice the width of the roots or wide enough for the potted root ball to fit inside, forking over the bottom to loosen the soil.

If you're planting into pots, use a pot that is roughly double the size of the current pot or diameter of the rootball. Place some stones or gravel in the bottom of the pot for drainage and ballast. Use the best-quality compost you can afford – we recommend our Premium Professional Compost.

Mix good quality fertiliser into the soil at the base of the hole or pot. We recommend Fish Blood & Bone, or our Rose & Shrub Feed for roses and hardy shrubs.

Plant at the same depth as the soil mark or level with the soil in the nursery pot. If your tree has been grafted, the graft point (a noticeable "knuckle" at the bottom of the trunk) must be at least 10cm (4") above soil level.

Holding the plant upright in position with one hand, slowly backfill the hole with soil.

Firm the soil around the plant to ensure good contact around the roots.

If planting larger standards or trees we recommend using one of our Tree Planting Kits to support your young tree as it establishes. Push 40cm of the stake into the soil next to your tree. Make a figure of eight around both the trunk and stake with a tie and fasten it off.

Water your plant thoroughly once planted and then at least weekly for the first 8 weeks – especially in dry weather. Do not allow the soil around your plants to dry out or become waterlogged.

Acers

Grow in a sheltered spot with protection from strong winds. Water well – particularly in warm, breezy weather – to help prevent scorching of the delicate leaves.

Gardenia, Rhododendron & Camellia

These items require acidic soil, so plant in pots using ericaceous compost or feed regularly with ericaceous feed.

Climbing Plants (Clematis, Wisteria, Jasmine etc.)

Climbing plants require support in order to grow and climb properly. Grow compact varieties in large patio containers, supported by trellis or canes. For larger climbers, grow up a wall or fence, supported by trellis or wires.

Roses

Plant roses as you would any other shrubs. Most roses should be planted about 1-1.2m (3-4ft) apart in the garden, or into large pots. If you have limited space, they can be easily pruned to size. Ensure climbers and ramblers have a frame or trellis to climb up.

Prune roses annually in early spring, before the new growth starts. Remove old and thin stems, cutting them down by about 60% to a new bud.

We recommend spraying roses with Sulphur Rose Tonic monthly from March to October, which is proven to control diseases such as blackspot and mildew, in addition to giving improved growth and stronger leaves.



Plant roses as you would any other shrubs. Most roses should be planted about 1-1.2m (3-4ft) apart in the garden, or into large pots.



Don't Forget!



Acer Feed

900g Resealable Pouch
For Acers in borders pots
and containers.
Organic - one feed lasts a
whole season.

Don't Forget!



Rose Feed

900g Resealable Pouch
Contains a traditional
formula with the three
major plant foods

Indoor Plants

To get the very best out of your plants, please read these care instructions...

Position

Houseplants prefer a well-lit, draught-free spot with an even temperature and good humidity - most windowsills provide the ideal location as long as they are not directly over a radiator or other heat source and not subject to direct sun for more than a few hours a day. Remember that some indoor plants such as ferns will prefer a more shaded position, while cacti, succulents and carnivorous plants like a bright windowsill. Orchids on the other hand will prefer bright, indirect light, fresh air and high humidity.

Watering

Overwatering is probably the single main cause of houseplant demise. Aim to keep the compost moist but wait until it has almost dried out before watering again. Just stick your finger into the compost to check!



Tap water is fine for most houseplants, while some of the more specialist plants, such as orchids, bromeliads and carnivorous plants need to be watered with rainwater or distilled water in a particular manner to keep them permanently moist.

Feeding

During their growing period, and especially when flowering, your plants will benefit from a weekly dose of liquid feed. Unfortunately, plants will sometimes suffer from pest infestation, from greenfly to red spider mite. These are all treatable with a product such as our Plant Invigorator and Defender. Many plants become dormant over winter and may drop their leaves or stop growing. Make sure that watering is only done when the soil is dry and then only enough to moisten it. Feeding can stop altogether at this time.

Bonsai

Trees in miniature, our range of bonsai are easy to care for, needing only a light trim each autumn to encourage branching. Water well as soon as the compost becomes dry but avoid standing the tree in the wet. Feed occasionally with bonsai feed and your tree should thrive and last a lifetime! Your tree will enjoy a summer holiday on a table outdoors. In winter the leaves may drop but don't worry - they'll reappear in spring. Be careful and only water very sparingly during this dormant time.



Don't Forget!



Bonsai Feed

250ml bottle of concentrated feed. Concentrated feed has been specially formulated to match the exact requirements of potted bonsai trees.

Make sure that watering is only done
when the soil is dry and then only
enough to moisten it.



Mediterranean & Exotic Plants



Many Mediterranean plants are easy to grow – low maintenance when established and hardier than they look, thriving in the UK with proper care. The vast majority are supplied as established potted plants, ready to plant out.



How To Plant

Most items should be grown in large pots as this will warm the roots – aiding growth. It will also enable you to move them to offer protection from frost or very low temperatures.

You should plant in the same way as any other potted tree or shrub, bearing the following in mind:

Ensure that you use a pot which will drain easily and mix good quality compost with some sand or grit to aid drainage. These plants do not like sitting in wet soil.

Grow in the warmest, sunniest part of your garden, as these plants are used to much better weather! Against a south-facing wall is ideal.

Feed and water them well in summer – almost all growth will be during the summer months. While these types of plants are very drought tolerant and can survive long periods without water, they will grow much better if well fed and watered in that period.

Feed them every other week during spring and summer with a high quality general purpose fertiliser such as Blooming Fast Superior Plant Food.

After 2-3 seasons of acclimatising to and growing in your garden, some plants will be suitable for growing directly in well-drained garden soil. Please see the relevant product page for full details.

Important: Only plant out exotic plants after the risk of late frosts has passed.

Plant out as soon as possible on receipt. If you cannot plant straight away, you must keep them somewhere sheltered and frost-free, such as a conservatory, garage or greenhouse. This is

especially important when buying early in the season when there may still be a chance of frost at night. **Note:** Some plants may have a white film or powder on the leaves when you receive them.

Don't worry – this is residue from fertiliser which is sprayed with water onto the plants and usually disappears quite quickly when washed off by our good old British weather!

Italian Cypresses (*Cupressus sempervirens*)

Evergreen and very hardy, these don't need protecting from frosts, but young plants will need sheltering from strong winds. Plant new trees with a Tree Planting Kit. Do not prune for the first year or two, then trim any branches that are out of shape back to a pencil shape, in early spring. Do not cut the main stem, otherwise they'll lose their shape. Remove any fir-cones as they form – this will keep the plant in the best, most upright shape.

Oleander

Weather will play a factor in flowering performance – cool, wet summers are not conducive to good flowering, whereas summers with a sustained period of hot weather should produce summer-long flowering displays.

Feed with a good quality balanced fertiliser in spring, then when the buds appear in early summer use a high potash feed such as Blooming Fast Superior Plant Food, to encourage flowering. Water well in spring and summer, but do not saturate the soil.

Oleander can withstand short exposure to -5°C when well-drained and less so if they are planted in wet spots. We recommend moving to shelter in winter. See the enclosed notes on hardiness for more info.

Important: Like many common garden plants, Oleander is toxic if ingested. Contact with the sap may also irritate the skin. However, there have been no reported incidents of poisoning in the UK or Europe. We recommend:

- Wear gloves when handling or pruning – particularly if your skin is sensitive.
- No need to prune your Oleander for the first few years, then only if it's getting too big.
- Avoid planting in places where pets or children may come into contact with or ingest the plants.



Palm Trees

Palm trees look exotic however they can thrive in the UK with proper care. Grow them in large pots – certainly for the first couple of years – so that you can move them somewhere that will offer protection from frost. See the individual product page for info on your plants' specific requirements. New growth will form from the centre of the plant during summer. When outer leaves turn brown and unsightly, chop them off at the base of the leaf. The "trunk" seen on mature plants is formed over 10-20 years from the stumps of removed leaves. Therefore, please do not be alarmed if the outer leaves of your plants start to die off shortly after you receive your order. New ones will shoot from the centre.

Tree Ferns

Plant in a shady, sheltered spot. Water via the top of the log and water well in hot and dry periods. Rainwater is preferable if you have a means for collecting it. If not, use distilled water rather than tap water, especially if you're in a hard water area. Feed weekly throughout spring and summer with specialist tree fern feed.

Be patient – it can take several months to show growth, dependent on weather conditions this year and also in previous seasons.

Make sure Protect from frost by bringing indoors, to a greenhouse, or giving it a generous covering of bubble wrap when the weather gets colder from mid-autumn. Fill the crown with fallen leaves before wrapping.



Plug Plants

For Bedding, Baskets & Patio Containers

On Receipt

For most Jumbo collections, the “mini greenhouse” they are packed in will have a label on the outside, listing the individual varieties inside. We recommend writing your own labels out on receipt!

Unpack plugs immediately and carefully and stand them in water for an hour prior to planting. They may be slightly dry or yellow after being in a dark box in the post but they'll completely recover within a few days.

If you can't plant straight away, plug plants can sit for up to a week if kept upright and moist (not too wet) in a light, airy spot – a windowsill or in a greenhouse is best.

Growing On Plug Plants

For plug plants in small trays, push them out using a dibber or pencil through the hole in the bottom of each cell.

Pot on using our Windowsill planters or 9cm pots in Shuttle Trays, using good multi-purpose compost.

Give your plants a good water initially, then only when the top compost starts to dry. They don't like to be left in standing water.

Planting Plug Plants

Before your plants are ready to be planted, prepare the ground well, removing weeds and digging in some compost or well-rotted manure if your soil is not already rich.

Most bedding plants should be spaced approx. 20cm (8") apart to allow them room to grow.

If planting into hanging baskets or pots, we recommend Easy Fill baskets for the very best full-basket displays. A comprehensive video planting guide is available on our website.

Feed using a high-potash feed such as Blooming Fast Superior Plant Food, to encourage flowering.

Dead-head when flowers fade to encourage more flowers.

Sweet Peas

Each net pot is multi-sown to contain a minimum of 4 plants. Plant directly into the ground with the pot (the roots will grow through), or tease the plants out of the pot and divide them, planting each separately. Sweet Peas require a support system to climb up such as wire, canes or netting. Once three or four pairs of leaves have developed the plants should be 'pinched' by removing an inch or so of the growing tips, to encourage more shoots to develop.

Important: Only plant out spring bedding plants after the risk of late frosts has passed.

PLUG PLANTS
Trays of small plants. Will need potting on for 4-5 weeks before planting out. Can go into pots straight away.

JUMBO PLUG PLANTS
Larger sized plug plants. Can be potted into pots straight away, but we advise growing on for 3 - 4 weeks before planting out.

GARDEN READY PLANTS
Very large plugs or trayplants. Ready to plant straight into the garden.

MULTI-SOWN NET POT
Each contains 4+ plants. Either plant directly in this pot or divide and plant individually.

Bulbs, Tubers & Corms

Bulbs are packed in perforated polythene bags, which are labelled with the variety and planting depth. If you cannot plant them straight away, keep them in a cool, dark, moisture-free place and they'll keep for up to 4 weeks. It is fine to plant bulbs even if a little green growth is starting to appear.



How to Plant

Bulbs can be planted either directly into your garden or into pots or containers. Check the bag for the correct planting depth for your bulbs – it will be printed there.

Dig a trench or planting hole to the correct depth. If you're unsure, there is a simple rule of thumb for planting bulbs:

Plant bulbs at twice the depth of the height of each one, and 4 times their width apart. E.g. 2cm round bulbs would need to be planted 4cm below the surface, and 8cm apart.

Plant your bulbs in the planting hole. While every bulb has a "top" (the pointed end) and a "bottom", they will self-right underground, so don't worry too much about which way up. They can just be scattered into the planting hole if you wish to save some time!

Water well once planted, then only when the soil is dry – they do not like to sit too wet.

While all the energy that a bulb needs in order to grow is stored in the bulb itself, they will do better if you feed them when in active green growth. Your bulbs will die back at the end of the growing season. Leave them in the ground once they die back – they'll come back bigger and better each year.



Lilies

Lilies form roots from the stem above the bulb, so they should be planted around 15cm (6") deep.

Begonia Tubers

When delivered in early spring, you should keep them in shelter. For best results, plant indoors in 9cm pots (concave side up) – or fill a plastic bag with moist compost and put in an airing cupboard – and they will start to shoot. Plant out in May when the risk of frost has passed. This will result in earlier, better displays.

"In The Green" Bulbs

We sell some bulbs – such as snowdrops – "in the green". When the plants are in leaf they are lifted from the ground, with the leaves still on the plants. These bulbs establish much quicker than dry bulbs, so you can expect full flowering displays the season after planting.

Late in the season, they can look yellowing or dying on receipt, which is totally normal – they will just die back to the bulb and will reappear bigger and better next year.



Perennials

Perennials are plants that persist for many growing seasons, as opposed to Annuals, which last a single season only. Often, they'll die back to ground level or even underground during winter, re-growing the following season and getting bigger year after year.

Other plants remain evergreen (such as grasses) adding structure and form to your garden over the winter.

A great, no-fuss way to bring colour and shape to any garden, perennials form the backbone of a classic "Cottage Garden" style and many will easily adapt to container growing.

When your order arrives, plants may look a little worse for wear dependent on their growing cycle and the time of year – and may even look like a pot full of soil with a barely noticeable crown. Please plant them with confidence as this is completely normal during autumn and winter. We supply perennials either as plug plants, potted plants, or as bare-roots. Treat them as you would any other plugs, bare-root or potted plant on receipt – see the relevant section in this guide.

Perennials are very easy to grow and care for and very rewarding, even for novice gardeners, and represent tremendous value for money. They fill spaces well, and over a few years can be chopped up or split to create new "free" plants for you to grow or swap.

Provide displays for many years with minimal effort, just make sure that they are well-watered during hot or dry spells, but don't over water



Dividing your perennials will ensure that they continue to grow healthily and perform year after year.



them in wetter weather. Apply a light mulch before winter and feed in early spring. Over time it is advisable to cut back and divide perennials.

You may choose to either cut them back in autumn, or spring although we'd advise leaving less-hardy perennials such as Penstemon until spring, so that the old stems and foliage can protect the crown of the plant from the worst frosts. Cutting back in autumn will make your garden look tidy for winter, but it removes height and structure - which you may want to keep for winter interest, and also to provide shelter for wildlife - in which case cut back in spring.

When cutting back in spring, cut close to the "crown" of the plant. Take great care to make sure you do not remove any new shoots or damage the crown.

Your perennials will continue to grow each year. Dividing them will ensure that they continue to grow healthily and perform year after year.

As a general rule, plants should be divided when they're dormant, in late autumn or early spring. Lift the plant by loosening the soil around the plant, taking care not to damage the roots. Shake off any excess soil, and remove any dead material, then gently divide the roots with a hand fork or spade.

Discard any old, woody growth from the centre of the plant and replant the divisions as soon as possible, ensuring that they don't dry out - to the same depth as the original plant, and with enough room to grow.



Miscellaneous



Items Supplied as Bare-Roots

Many trees and shrubs are supplied as “bare-roots” in autumn and winter – i.e. dormant, with the roots out of the soil. Don't worry if the roots have been cut quite harshly – this is done to encourage new root growth.

If you've ordered a collection, they will likely be root wrapped together. Please open the bag to check your order – it can look like just one plant at first glance!

Before you plant them, soak the roots overnight. If you can't plant straight away, they should be fine for up to 2 weeks if left in a cool, dark, frost-free place – keep the bag around the roots and moisten the roots regularly so they don't dry out.

Don't Forget!



RHS Rootgrow Mycorrhizal Fungi

RHS Rootgrow Mycorrhizal Fungi 60g
The completely natural way to look after the secret root system of all plants and trees, especially bare root

When planting, add some mycorrhizal granules to the roots to aid root development and plant health.

Water bare-root plants thoroughly and often while they establish – particularly when planting in spring, and in dry weather, in their first growing year.

Before you plant them, soak the roots overnight.



Winter Protection & Hardiness

Protecting exotic plants over winter is very important. A number of factors will affect hardiness – including the age of the plant, moisture, soil conditions or how recently it was planted. Many plants survive short exposure to a given “Hardy To” temperature (see individual product pages on our website) and below this they will die. If exposed to prolonged low temperatures around or below 0°C, they will also deteriorate.

Additionally, if the soil/compost is waterlogged, many plants will also struggle. This is often more important than the temperature. That said, many of these plants are all known to thrive in the UK if well looked-after and will become more tolerant over the coming years as they establish.

OUR ADVICE IS:

Keep potted plants in a greenhouse, garage or conservatory during autumn, winter and early spring. In most cases, over-wintering them somewhere with little light will not harm your plants – just make sure they don't dry out.

If you are growing plants in the ground, cover with Fleece Covers and mulch over the ground to add extra protection.

The more established a plant is, the more likely it is to survive harsher weather, so take extra care in the first few years.

Don't Forget!



Plant Warming Fleece Cosies

Plant Warming Fleece Cosies Protect your valuable tender plants with these fleeces
Allow light through, so do not slow growth
Can provide up 4 Celsius of temperature lift on cold days
1.2M x 80cm, so big enough for most plants.

Notes on Pruning

Different plants require pruning in different ways and at different times of the year depending on whether they flower or fruit on old or new growth. Please see the detailed care guides on our website for information about individual varieties.

As a general rule, when pruning hardy shrubs and trees, cut back roughly a third of the branch of mature stems – it is generally better to over prune than under! Remove any old or dead wood and trim down to an outward facing bud, to create a nice shaped plant.

Always use good quality, sharp secateurs or pruners – and take care!

