

# HOME GARDEN LESSON 3

## Planning a Garden



**SCIENCE:** Observing, Investigating, Planning, Questioning

**MATHEMATICS:** Measuring, Mapping, Estimating

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** Reading, Comprehending, Describing

**VISUAL ARTS:** Drawing, Designing

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Anyone can grow a garden! As long as the essential components are present (sun, water, dirt/soil and nutrients), any garden space can be successful. Container gardens, ground plots and raised planter boxes are all effective ways to grow a garden, but choosing the best option can be a tough decision.

In this lesson, we will outline the pros and cons of each type of garden, as well as how to plan and map out a garden.

**This lesson should be completed when the young plants from [Home Garden Lesson 2](#) have been hardened off, and are now permanently living outside.**

### 3.2 CHOOSING A GARDEN TYPE: PROS AND CONS



#### POTS

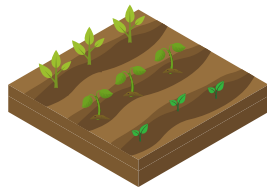
This type of garden can be grown in any container that can hold soil/dirt.

##### PROS

- Easy to move
- Less prone to weeds, pests and diseases
- Can be decorated
- Eco-friendly if reusing containers

##### CONS

- Soil dries out quickly
- Some plants need larger or smaller containers in order to grow successfully
- Size of garden is limited to the number of pots



#### PLOTS

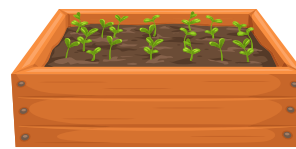
This type of garden can be grown anywhere there is dirt and space to grow.

##### PROS

- No need to buy soil
- Doesn't require much work to prepare
- Easy to dig up and move plants/start over

##### CONS

- Not all dirt is good for growing; may need to add nutrients
- Stepping on the dirt can compress it, which hinders root growth
- Higher risk of weeds, pests and diseases



#### PLANTERS

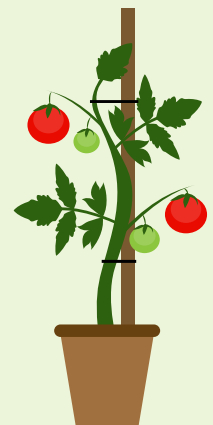
This type of garden is grown in raised boxes made of wood or other materials.

##### PROS

- Can tend plants without compressing soil
- Working in raised beds is less stressful on the body
- More space for plants to grow (especially plants that require a lot of depth, such as root vegetables)

##### CONS

- Takes work to build planter boxes
- Building materials and soil are an expense
- Difficult to move



### TIPS AND TOOLS

Plants with heavier vegetables, such as tomatoes or zucchinis, may need some extra support.

Put a wooden stake in the soil close to the plant; be careful of the roots! Gently secure the stem to it with string. It will need to be adjusted as the plant grows taller.



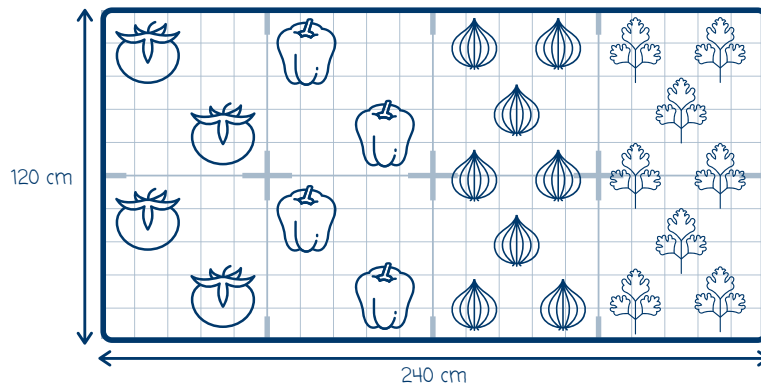
### 3.3 CREATE A GARDEN MAP

1. On the top of the next blank page in your garden journal, write the words "**Garden Map**". The following activity will be completed on this page.
2. Using seed packages or other resources available, research the space requirements of the vegetables that will be planted in your garden.
3. Make a chart that includes:
  - a. The vegetable being planted
  - b. How much space is needed between plants
  - c. How big of a container is needed (if planting in pots)

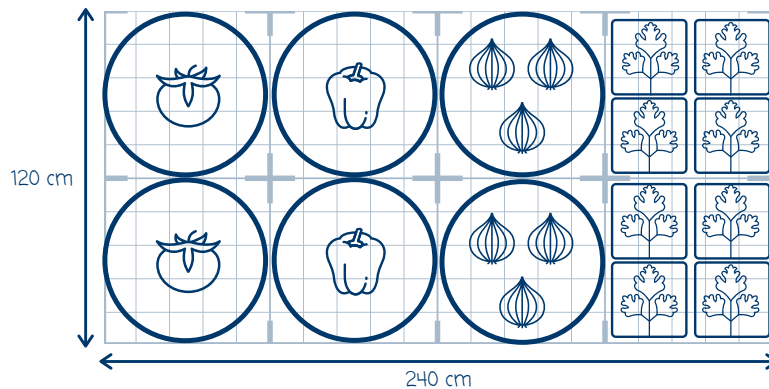
The chart might look something like this:

Vegetable	How much space between plants?	How big should the pot be?
Tomato	45-90 cm between each plant	60 cm deep and wide
Onion	10-15 cm between each plant	30 cm deep and wide

4. Measure the garden area from one end to the other. How long is it? How wide is it? If using containers, how big is each container?
5. Draw a grid (see below for our example). Alternatively, tape or glue a small piece of graph paper into the journal.
6. Using these measurements and the space requirements for each plant, map the garden space. Try to plant the tallest crops on the east or north side of the garden and shortest plants on the west or south side to maximize sunlight. The finalized map might look something like this for a ground plot or planter:



If planting in pots or containers, the map may look more like this:



7. If planting in a container garden, arrange the pots as laid out in the map. If using an in-ground plot or raised planter, use the map as a guide for where to transplant the young plants. When transplanting, remember: be gentle with the roots and water generously immediately after!

### 3.3 MATERIALS:

- Garden journal
- Pen or pencil

### OPTIONAL MATERIALS

- Seed packets
- Ruler or other straight edge for drawing grids/charts
- Graph paper if not drawing a grid

### ✓ TIPS AND TOOLS

Here is a quick guide to choosing a container size!

Vegetable	Container Size	
Tomatoes Peppers Eggplants Squash Broccoli Cauliflower Brussels Sprouts	Large (at least 60 cm deep & wide)	
Beans / Peas Kale / Collards / Swiss Chard Carrots / Beets Onions Sage / Rosemary / Thyme		
Lettuce Spinach Arugala Radishes Basil / Parsley / Cilantro / Chives		Small (less than 30 cm deep & wide)

### ✓ TIPS AND TOOLS

Stuck on what to plant in the garden? Choose a favourite veggie-filled recipe (such as salsa) and plant a garden based on the ingredients.

For a salsa garden, try planting peppers, tomatoes, onions and cilantro. Look at the maps in this activity for an example of a salsa garden. **Yum!**

Stay tuned for the next Home Garden Lesson!

