



Garden Lesson 3: Planning a Garden

SCIENCE Question, Observe, Plan, Investigate

MATHEMATICS Measure, Map, Estimate

LANGUAGE ARTS Comprehend, Read, Write, Describe

VISUAL ARTS Design, Draw

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Anyone can grow a garden! As long as the essential components are present (sun, water, 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, so it is up to the gardener to choose the best method for them.

Lesson 3 will outline how to effectively plan and map out a garden. These activities can be completed before or after hardening off any plants started indoors, but before any direct sowing (when seeds are planted directly outside).

Common Garden Types



Pots

Benefits:

- Mobile
- Low risk of weeds/pests/diseases
- Eco-friendly if using recycled containers

Drawbacks:

- Soil dries out quickly
- Garden is limited by size/number of containers



Plots

Benefits:

- No need to buy soil
- Minimal prep required
- Easy to dig up and re-plant as necessary

Drawbacks:

- Potential lack of nutrients in soil
- Risk of stepping on plants
- High risk of weeds/pests/diseases



Planters

Benefits:

- No risk of stepping on plants
- Easier on the body
- More space/depth for plants to grow

Drawbacks:

- Takes work to build planter boxes
- Expense of building materials/soil
- Difficult to move once in place

TIPS AND TOOLS

Here is a quick guide to choosing garden container size:

Vegetable	Size
Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant, Squash, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Brussels Sprouts	Large (at least 60 cm deep & wide)
Beans, Peas, Kale, Collards, Swiss Chard, Carrots, Beets, Onions, Sage, Rosemary, Thyme	Medium (at least 30 cm deep & wide)
Lettuce, Spinach, Arugula, Basil, Parsley, Cilantro, Radishes, Chives	Small (<30 cm deep & wide)

3.2 RESEARCH SPACE REQUIREMENTS

1. In your garden journal, write "Planting Map" at the top of the next blank page. 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 the garden.
3. Create a chart that includes:
 - a. What is being planted
 - b. How much space is needed between each individual plant
 - c. If planting in containers, what size container is needed (see Tips and Tools)

3.2 EXAMPLE:

Vegetable	How much space between plants?	What size container?
Tomato	45-90 cm on all sides	60 cm deep and wide

3.2 MATERIALS:

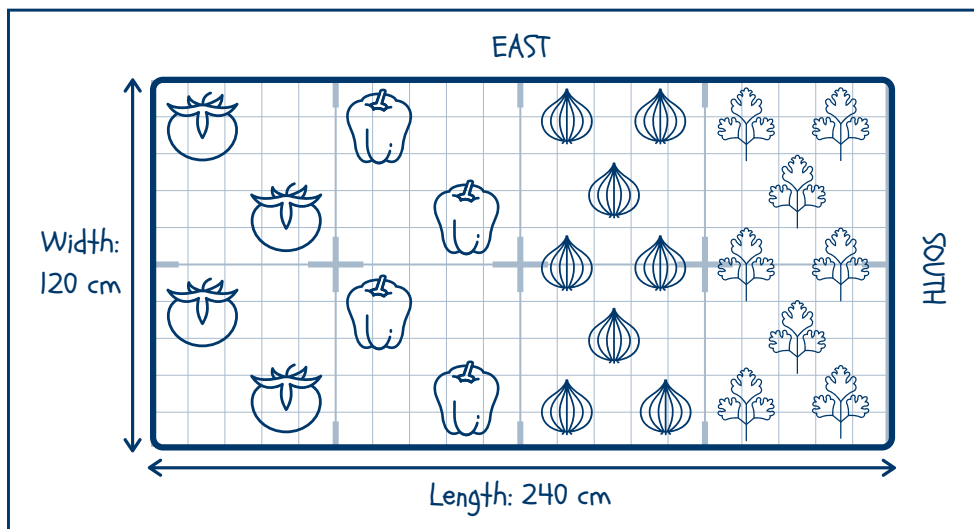
- Garden journal
- Pencil or pen



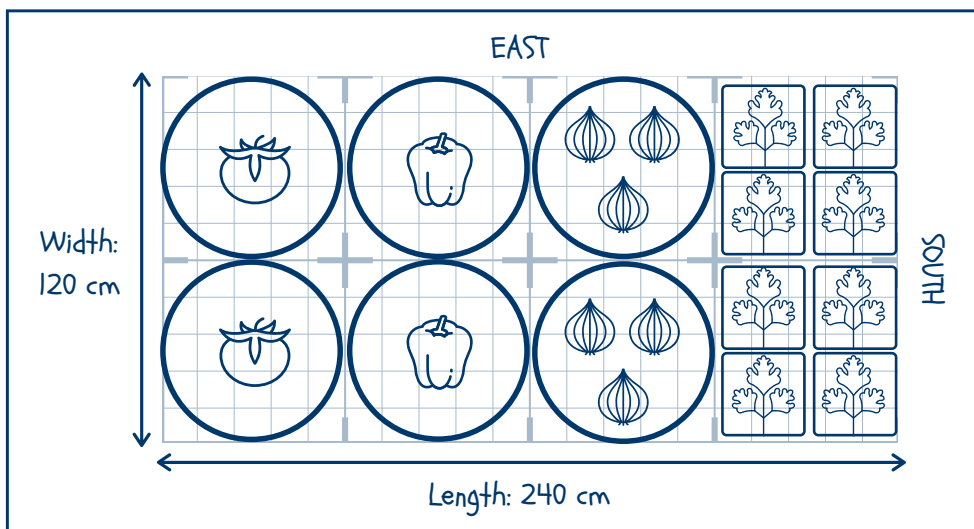
3.3 CREATE A PLANTING MAP

1. 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?
2. Draw a grid (see below for our example). Alternatively, tape or glue a small piece of graph paper into the journal.
3. Using these measurements and the space requirements for each plant, map the garden space. Indicate which direction each side of the garden is facing (i.e. east, west, north or south). If possible, plan 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.

3.3.1 EXAMPLE (IN-GROUND PLOT OR RAISED GARDEN BED):



3.3.2 EXAMPLE (CONTAINER GARDEN):



4. If planting in a container garden, arrange the pots as indicated in the map. If using an in-ground plot or raised bed, use the map as a guide for where to transplant the seedlings. When transplanting, remember to be gentle with the roots and water generously immediately after!

3.3 MATERIALS:

- Garden journal
- Pen or pencil

OPTIONAL:

- Seed packets
- Ruler or other straight edge for drawing grids/charts
- Graph paper

TIPS AND TOOLS

Not sure 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. See **Activity 3.3** for an example of a salsa garden.

Heavier vegetables, such as tomatoes or zucchinis, may need extra support while growing.

Insert a thin wooden stake into the soil while the plant is still small to avoid damaging the roots. When the plant reaches 30 cm tall, loosely tie it to the stake with string. Adjust as it grows.

Alternatively, use a tomato cage for low-maintenance support.

