

Allotment Checklist

Your First Allotment: Beginner Checklist

Taking on your first allotment is exciting, but it helps to be prepared. Use this checklist to make sure you have everything you need — from tools and seeds to planning and maintenance essentials.

1. Planning & Paperwork

- ☐ Confirm allotment tenancy and rules with your site committee
- ☐ Note plot number, boundaries, and water access points
- ☐ Make a simple layout plan (beds, paths, compost area, shed)
- ☐ Keep a gardening journal for sowing dates, planting notes, and harvests

2. Tools & Equipment

- ☐ Garden fork & spade
- ☐ Hoe for weeding
- ☐ Hand trowel and hand fork
- ☐ Rake (leaf and soil)
- ☐ Secateurs / pruning shears
- ☐ Watering can / hose (if allowed)
- ☐ Wheelbarrow or garden trolley
- ☐ Gloves (heavy-duty and lightweight)
- ☐ Kneeling pad or small stool
- ☐ Garden twine, plant labels, and stakes
- ☐ Storage: shed, box, or crate for tools

3. Soil & Bed Preparation

- ☐ Compost or well-rotted manure
- ☐ Mulch (bark, straw, or cardboard)
- ☐ Soil testing kit (pH and basic nutrients)
- ☐ Optional: Raised bed materials (timber, pallets, or bricks)

Allotment Checklist

4. Seeds & Plants

- ☐ Easy starter vegetables: carrots, radish, lettuce, courgettes, onions
- ☐ Herbs: parsley, chives, basil
- ☐ Fruit: strawberries, raspberries (optional)
- ☐ Seed trays or pots (for indoor sowing)
- ☐ Labels for plants and rows

5. Watering & Irrigation

- ☐ Water butt (if allowed) or container for rainwater
- ☐ Hosepipe (if site permits)
- ☐ Watering can
- ☐ Mulch to retain soil moisture

6. Pest & Wildlife Management

- ☐ Garden netting for brassicas and peas
- ☐ Copper tape / beer traps for slugs and snails
- ☐ Bug hotel or simple wildlife shelter (optional)
- ☐ Row covers or fleece for frost protection

7. Seasonal Essentials

- ☐ Cold frames or cloches for early sowing
- ☐ Garden fleece for frost-sensitive crops
- ☐ Stakes or trellis for climbing plants (beans, peas, tomatoes)
- ☐ Harvest baskets or containers

8. Maintenance & Organization

- ☐ Notebook or digital tracker for weekly tasks
- ☐ Calendar for sowing, planting, and harvesting dates
- ☐ Labels for compost bins and storage areas
- ☐ Path maintenance tools (strimmer, rake, or board for edging)
- ☐ First-aid kit (basic cuts and blisters)

Allotment Checklist

9. Optional Extras

- ☐ Bench or small seating area
- ☐ Shade netting for delicate crops
- ☐ Small solar light for early mornings/late evenings
- ☐ Seed-saving envelopes for future seasons

10. Prioritising What You Need

- ☐ Focus on what you need **this season** – you don't need everything at once.
- ☐ Plan your sowing and planting schedule based on **the time of year**.
- ☐ Start with essential tools and easy-to-grow crops first.
- ☐ Add optional equipment and plants gradually as you gain experience.
- ☐ Keep a simple **calendar or tracker** to plan when to sow, plant, water, and harvest.

Remember: allotment gardening is a seasonal process – patience and planning make it enjoyable and manageable.

Tip: By prioritising, you can spread costs, reduce overwhelm, and ensure you have the right tools and seeds at the right time.