



growing instructions for

Lodge Cottrell Sweet Pea Mixture



Sweet Peas are actually very easy to grow and the following is intended to help you get the very best plants. They have an annual flowering cycle. Sowing is best in autumn or spring, according to climate.

How to sow:

Sow one seed to a 8cm (3in) pot or 6 to 8 seeds to a 15cm (6in) pot.

Or, in temperate climate (be guided by local weather conditions), you can simply sow them in March or April in the soil where you intend them to grow. However, in doing this, you risk them being eaten by mice or birds.

Do not soak or chip the seeds as this may reduce germination.

Use multi-purpose compost and ensure seeds are covered by no more than 1cm (½ inch) of compost after sowing.

Do not firm the compost but water the pots with a fine rose.

Place the pots in a cold frame or cold greenhouse and protect against mice and slugs. Germination should take place after two weeks.

If you are sowing in November to February your seeds may need a little gentle heat to germinate eg. on a kitchen windowsill.

Make sure you move them to a cold greenhouse as soon as the young shoots break the surface of the compost, otherwise your plants will get elongated or 'leggy'.

Plants should be given as much light as possible.

How to look after your seedlings:

From an autumn or winter sowing, the seedlings will tolerate light frost and should be grown hard.

Take precautions against slugs, snails, mice and birds.

Protect against damaging winds. When hard frosts are forecast, say below -5°C, your seedlings will need some extra protection. Close the frame's lights and add some lagging (e.g newspaper, bubble wrap, sacking etc). If the weather is particularly cold or the frosts prolonged, leave the lagging on to allow the seedlings to thaw slowly.

Planting Out:

Space plants about 15cm (6in) apart in a sunny position and provide some sort of support for them to climb, such as sticks, bamboo canes or trellis.

If space is limited, they can be planted in a large tub, preferably no smaller than 60cm (2ft) deep.

Water plants regularly according to prevailing weather. This is best done in the morning.

Flowers should be removed after flowering in order to prolong the flowering period. If allowed to go to seed, these can be sown again for the following year.

Climates with hot summers:

Do not nip out the tips of young plants to encourage side shoot formation. Side shoots will develop naturally if the plants have been grown hard enough and winter root growth is preferred to shoot growth. Only pinch out the odd plant which fails to form side shoots at the same time as others.

Best time for sowing is in Autumn so that your plants are flowering in late Spring and early Summer, in order to avoid the excessive heat of mid Summer.

Plants should ideally be grown in a position where they get natural shade, from a tree or building, during the hottest part of the day.

Damping the ground around the plants with water on hot days will allow this to evaporate and improve humidity around the plant leaves.

Climates with very cold winters:

To get the best from your seeds you should sow them indoors 6 – 8 weeks before the last hard frost is predicted.

When the plants are around 8cm (3in) high and have at least four leaves, pinch out the growing tip to encourage side shoot formation lower down the plant.

Plants should be grown in full sun.