



## Allotment Activities Handout

Key Stage 2

Composited off Twinkl by

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# My Allotment Monthly Tasks

<p><b>January</b> Cold and wintery, now is the time to clear your allotment of any autumn debris: leaves, twigs and damaged plants. You should be able to harvest winter vegetables. (Check your Crop Calendar to see which should be ready) and, if part of the month turns out mild, you could sow some seeds. (Check seed packets to know which).</p> <p><b>May</b> May can be very hit or miss weather-wise. The potential for hot, dry spells means it's important to keep new plant growth watered. However, there is still the possibility of frosty nights or heavy showers, which are equally damaging to your young crops. Keep an eye on the weather forecasts and protect plants as necessary. Check your Crop Calendar to see what you can plant this month.</p> <p><b>September</b> Summer seems like a distant memory, though September can still bring warm, sunny days, so continue to water any crops or seedlings. A lot of plants will have now offered their last crops of the year, so you could research how to compost these to make rich nourishment for next year. Start to prepare the soil, digging it over in readiness for next year's planting.</p>	<p><b>February</b> Depending on temperatures during February, it may be time to sow more seeds. (Remember to check seed packets to know which can go out). Now is the perfect time to build a scarecrow or smarten up an existing one; the birds will start to show more interest in your plot as seeds will form perfect food for our feathered friends!</p> <p><b>June</b> Sun, sun, sun is the order of the month (hopefully)! Keep plants well-watered (it's best to do this during the cooler parts of the day to avoid the sun's intense heat evaporating all that water). Along with great plant growth, comes the unfortunate abundance of WEEDS! Your hoe will be your fiend to control their growth. More pests will appear in June too, so keep them at bay with safe deterrents.</p> <p><b>October</b> Dig deep then dig deeper! Digging over any unplanted ground now is really important to make it easier to dig over next spring. There's still likely to be plenty to harvest if you've planted late-growing crops. (Think pumpkins – it is October after all!) As nights turn longer and cooler, frost becomes a possibility once again. Have protection ready for any plants or seedlings growing for winter.</p>	<p><b>March</b> Finally, after the long winter, you'll start to notice longer days, which means spring is just around the corner! Dig over the ground so the soil is loose and ready for planting. Check your Crop Calendar to know which vegetables can be planted out now, though most will still need to be started indoors or in a greenhouse to protect them from the weather.</p>	<p><b>April</b> Frost on the ground is still a possibility throughout April, so it might be a good idea to keep any seedlings covered with some garden fleece to protect them. If the weather is kind, a lot of vegetable and herb seeds can be sown this month. Look carefully for the first sign of garden pests, and research some methods to eradicate them safely.</p>
		<p><b>July</b> All you can think of is summer, right? But now is the time to plant winter vegetables! Check seed packs for instructions. Keep on weeding, as they'll just keep growing with all that sunshine and water! Now is the time you'll start to reap the rewards of your hard work and preparation, as there should be plenty of produce to harvest! Research some recipes to use up all of those vegetables and herbs!</p>	<p><b>August</b> So much produce! There should be A LOT of vegetables and herbs ready for picking this month. Keep up that watering, as it's likely to be hot, and remember to weed to keep in check those pesky wild plants. It's a good idea to check your Crop Calendar to see if there are any other seeds to be sown.</p>
		<p><b>November</b> Although the days are turning chilly, there should be just enough bright, dry days left to get out into your allotment plot to clear it, ready for the winter. Autumn leaves, twigs and leftover plants can be raked away, leaving you plenty of free space to finish that digging. Some of your winter vegetables could well be ready to harvest this month; it's a good idea to check your Crop Calendar to find out which.</p>	<p><b>December</b> There's little to do on the allotment plot this month, so spend some quality time deciding what you'd like to plant and grow in the following year. Remember to pop out to check on and pick the last of the winter vegetables before Christmas; if you planted any, there might be some nice Brussels sprouts to cook for your Christmas dinner! Update your Allotment Diary with achievements and challenges from the year too!</p>

# How to Plant and Grow Vegetables

## 1. Where to Grow Vegetables

Growing your own vegetables and herbs is becoming more popular and is especially possible because of the land people can rent from either a local council or private landlord, known as an allotment. These areas of land allow people to grow their own fresh food, reducing their food costs and offering the sense of achievement that comes from producing their own harvest. Follow these simple steps to grow some garden-fresh vegetables and herbs yourself!

## 2. Preparing the Ground

It is really important to prepare your ground by removing all weeds. This can be rather tricky as these tenacious plants notoriously spread and grow easily and quickly. Try cutting them right back with a spade or hoe so they just poke up through the soil and then dig them out using a fork. Rake any leftover leaves, stems or roots to completely clear the ground. Use the fork to dig over the entire plot so the soil is loose and then use a rake to level it, ready for planting.

## 3. What is the Soil Like?

Once your ground is clear and prepared, it is important to investigate the soil within your allotment. Research the different types of soil and take two or three samples from different parts of your allotment. Observe these closely and examine the colour and texture of the soil. Try testing the pH levels of your soil in a science lesson! Compare your samples to the soil types you have researched to conclude what type(s) of soil you have. Now you can find out which vegetables and herbs will grow best on your land.

## 4. Planting Seeds

Follow the instructions on the seed packets for planting your vegetables or herbs. Some seeds germinate quickly, such as salad leaves or beans, while others take longer and some are even best sown indoors or in seed trays before planting on your allotment. Think carefully about how much space your plants will need to grow and space out your seeds to allow between your seeds for you to be able to get to your plants without trampling them. Also, water the ground well once your seeds are planted.

## 5. Nurturing the Plants

Your plants will need water and light to grow and thrive. Water your plants when the sun is not at its strongest to prevent the sun's intense heat from evaporating the water too quickly. It is important to keep weeds at bay too, to prevent them from taking the water and nutrients away from your plants. Sometimes, it might be necessary to use a net or fleece cover to protect your plants from frosts, heavy rain and wind or creatures. Consider making your own scarecrow by following the How To Make Your Own Scarecrow Step-by-Step Instructions in order to deter the birds too!

## 6. Reap What You Sow

Finally, it's time for all your hard work to pay off! Check planting instructions for when your crops should be ready to harvest. Look carefully at the size and colour of the produce to help you to decide whether it is ripe and ready or not. You could try using a garden planner or calendar to find out and record when different crops should be fully grown. With careful and considered planting, you could produce fruit, vegetables and herbs right around the year, keeping down food costs and enjoying fresh, home-grown produce.



# Crop Calendar – Sowing Schedule

Use this handy calendar to check when to sow the seeds for different fruits, vegetables and herbs on your allotment.

Month	Vegetables	Fruit
<b>January</b>	Onions, Leeks, Peas, Garlic, Broad Beans	Apples, Pears, Gooseberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, Cherries, Peaches, Nectarines, Rhubarb
<b>February</b>	Onions, Leeks, Spinach, Lettuce, Brussels Sprouts, Garlic, Peas, Broad Beans, Potatoes (First Early)	Apples, Pears, Gooseberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, Cherries, Peaches, Nectarines, Rhubarb, Tomatoes
<b>March</b>	Brussels Sprouts, Cabbages, Lettuces, Broad Beans, Beetroot, Carrots, Leeks, Onions, Peas, Spinach, Spring Onions, Potatoes (Second Early and Maincrop)	Apples, Pears, Gooseberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, Cherries, Peaches, Nectarines, Strawberries, Raspberries, Tomatoes
<b>April</b>	Pumpkins, Runner Beans, Beetroot, Lettuces, Broad Beans, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbages, Carrots, Onions, Peas, Spinach, Spring Onions, Herbs, Potatoes (Maincrop)	Tomatoes
<b>May</b>	Pumpkins, Runner Beans, Beetroot, Lettuces, Cabbages, Carrots, Courgettes, Peas, Spinach, Spring Onions, Herbs, Potatoes (Second Early and Maincrop)	Melons
<b>June</b>	Beetroot, Carrots, Courgettes, Peas, Pumpkins, Runner Beans, Lettuces, Spring Onions	-
<b>July</b>	Beetroot, Cabbages, Carrots, Peas, Lettuces, Spring Onions,	-
<b>August</b>	Cabbages, Carrots, Onions, Spinach, Lettuces, Spring Onions	Strawberries
<b>September</b>	Spinach, Lettuces, Spring Onions, Cabbages, Onions	Cranberries, Nectarines, Peaches, Strawberries
<b>October</b>	Broad Beans, Peas, Cabbages, Garlic, Onions	Rhubarb, Gooseberries, Grape Vines, Nectarines, Peaches, Strawberries
<b>November</b>	Broad Beans, Garlic	Apples, Apricots, Blackberries, Blueberries, Cherries, Cranberries, Gooseberries, Grape Vines, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Raspberries
<b>December</b>	Broad Beans, Garlic	Apples, Apricots, Blackberries, Blueberries, Cherries, Gooseberries, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Raspberries, Rhubarb

Key: Blue - Indoors, Green - Outdoors

### Sandy

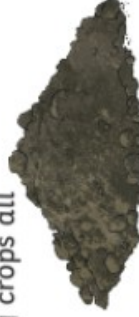
Like the name suggests, sandy soil is mostly made up of, wait for it... sand! Because of the fine grains, water drains well through this soil and since it stays pretty dry, you can easily get the fork through it. Of course, that means any plants growing here will need to be well watered. A fertiliser should also be used to top up the nutrients that are so easily swept away.



### Loam

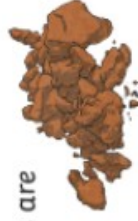
Mix, mix, mix!

Loam soils are a good mixture of sand, silt and clay. This soil holds on to most of its nutrients and keeps enough water to help plants get what they need. It also drains enough to avoid waterlogging. This makes loam soil an allotment's best friend when it comes to growing crops all year round!



### Clay

The trickiest of all to work with, clay based soils are known for being cloddy thanks to their ability to hold on to water. Of course, this in means they can become waterlogged and muddy all too easily – a gardening nuisance. On the upside, clay soils also hold on well to nutrients so fewer artificial fertilisers are needed to support crop growth.



### Silt

With medium sized particles, silt soils hold on to enough water to allow for good plant growth while draining enough to avoid waterlogging. The particles allow silt soil to compress (squash down) very easily, making it difficult to dig, plant and de-weed. On a positive note, it tends to maintain enough nutrients to make it fertile, supporting crop growth.



### Chalk

As you might expect, chalk based soils contain a lot of calcium carbonate (chalk). It can be challenging to grow some plants in these types of soils as many plants prefer to grow in more acidic conditions (think vinegar!). Water drains quickly through chalk soil so plants cannot get enough moisture.



### Peat

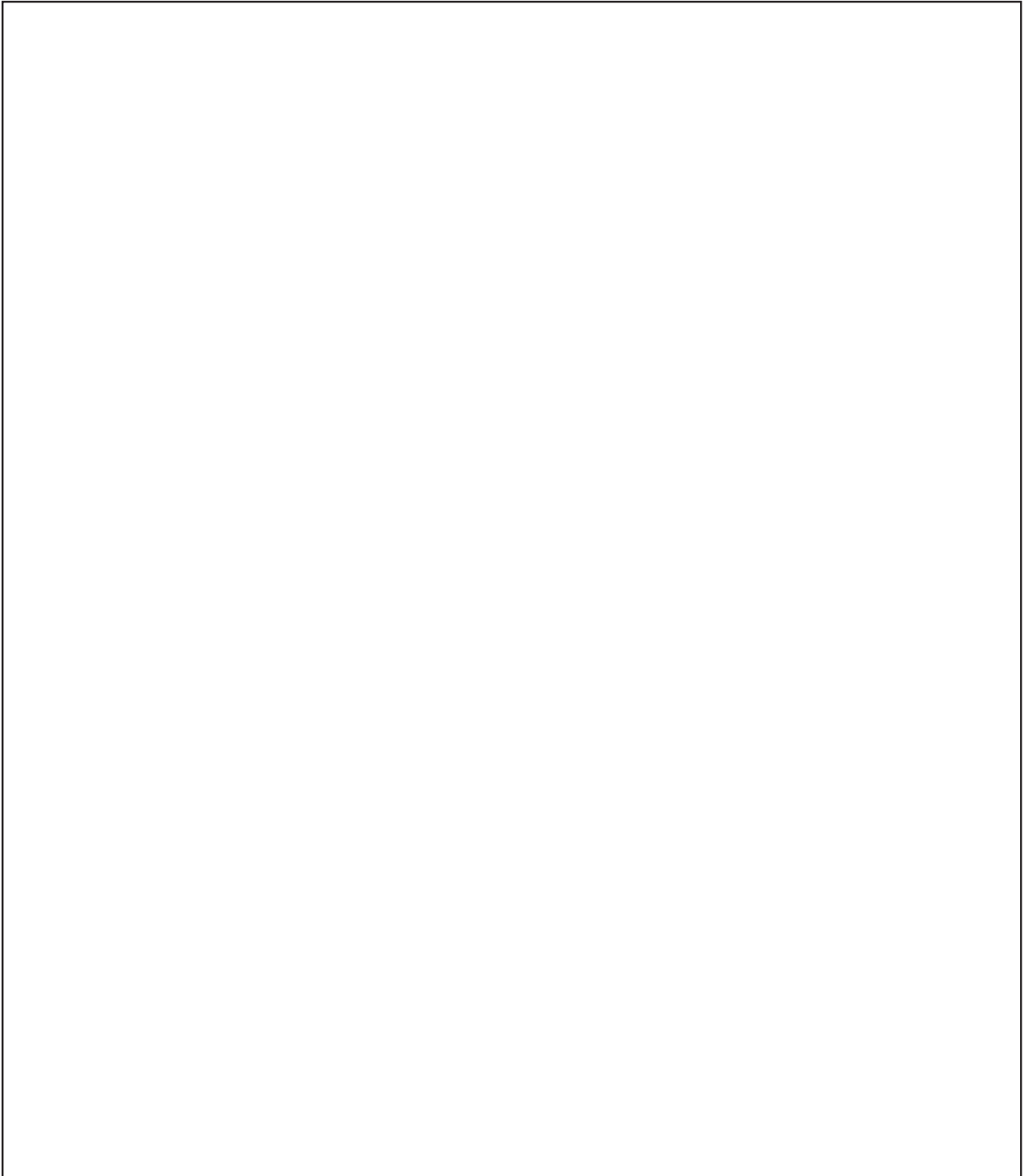
What happens when moss, shrubs and grasses die? They form peat! Very rarely found naturally in an allotment plot, peat is generally formed near bogs and marshlands. Here plants do not fully decay, leaving the matter that's left extremely high in nutrients. Gardeners often choose to buy peat and add it to their existing soil to improve its fertility.



## Types of Soil

# Allotment Plan

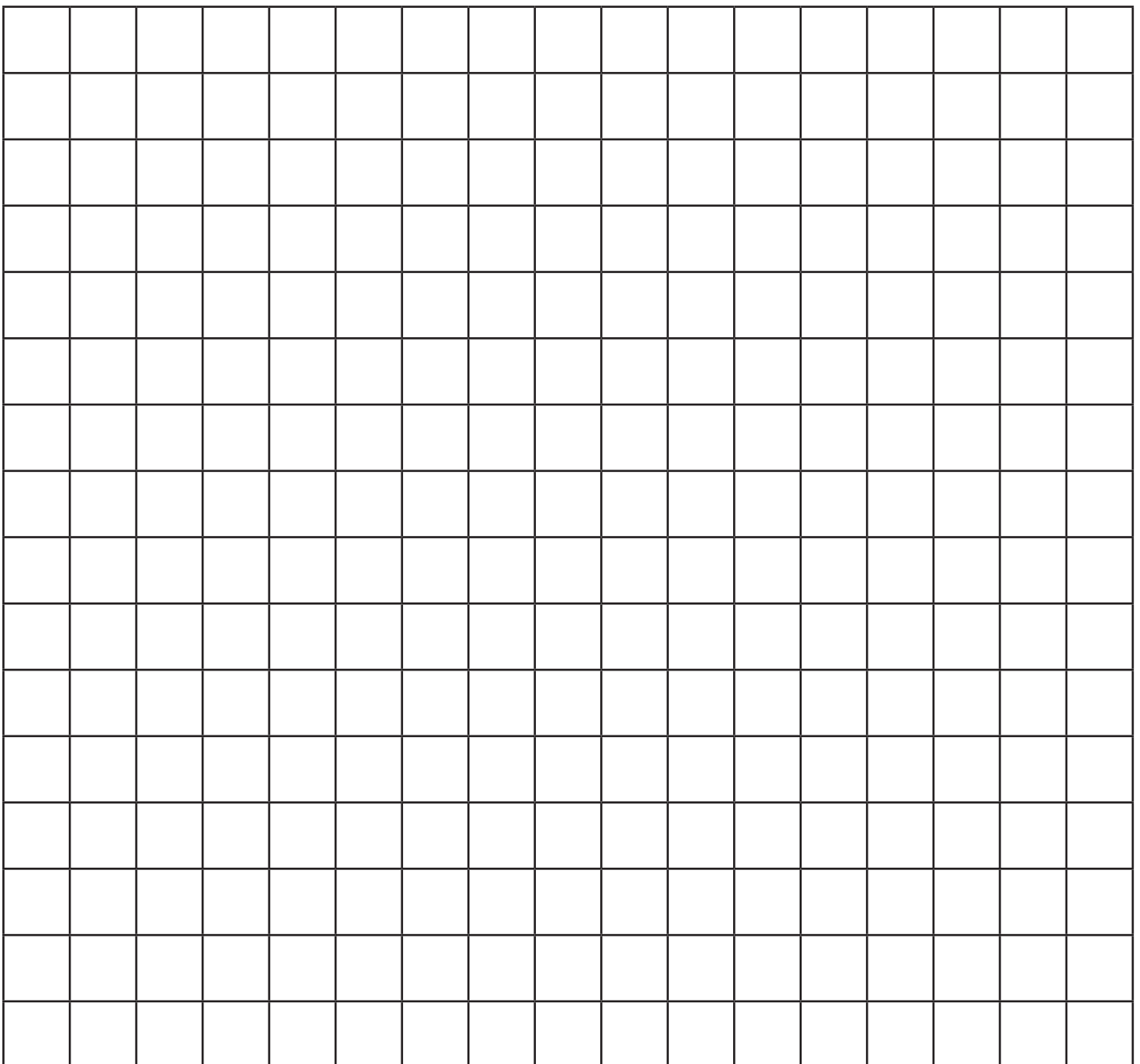
1. Create a sketch on this page of the shape of your allotment.
2. Measure the lengths of the perimeter of your allotment and add the dimensions to your sketch below.



# Allotment Plan

Now it's time to plan your allotment in detail.

1. Decide on a scale you can use to map out your allotment. The squares on this page are 1cm x 1cm. For example, a scale of 1m:10cm would mean for every 1m draw a 10cm line.
2. Draw out the perimeter of your allotment on the 1cm squared paper.
3. Use your Allotment Research Sheet to help you to divide your scale diagram below into areas, marking out and labelling each planting bed. Think carefully about the actual size of each bed.



# Crop Calendar – Harvest Time

Use this handy calendar to check when to expect the crops you've nurtured on your allotment to be ready for harvest.

Month	Vegetables	Fruit
<b>January</b>	Brussels Sprouts, Leeks, Winter Cabbages, Parsnips, Swedes	-
<b>February</b>	Brussels Sprouts (Lates), Leeks, Winter Cabbages, Parsnips, Swedes	-
<b>March</b>	Brussels Sprouts (Lates), Spring Onions, Spring Cabbages	Rhubarb
<b>April</b>	Asparagus, Spring Onions, Spring Cabbages, Spinach (Young Leaves)	Rhubarb
<b>May</b>	Asparagus, Spring Onions, Spring Cabbages, Spinach, Garlic	Rhubarb
<b>June</b>	Asparagus (Late), Potatoes (First Early), Garlic, Lettuce, Peas, Broad Beans, Beetroot	Rhubarb, Raspberries, Cherries, Gooseberries
<b>July</b>	Potatoes (First Early and Second Early), Onions, Carrots, Garlic, Lettuce, Peas, Runner Beans, Courgettes, Beetroot	Raspberries, Strawberries, Cherries, Gooseberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, Peaches, Nectarines, Melons
<b>August</b>	Potatoes (Second Early and Maincrop), Onions, Brussels Sprouts (Early), Carrots, Leeks (Small), Garlic, Lettuce, Peas, Courgettes, Beetroot	Raspberries, Strawberries, Cherries, Gooseberries, Melons, Blackberries, Blueberries, Peaches, Nectarines, Apples (Early), Tomatoes, Pears (Early)
<b>September</b>	Potatoes (Maincrop), Pumpkins, Onions, Brussels Sprouts (Early), Carrots, Leeks, Lettuce, Peas, Courgettes, Beetroot	Raspberries, Blackberries, Blueberries, Strawberries (Lates), Apples, Tomatoes (Greenhouse), Melons, Pears, Grapes
<b>October</b>	Potatoes (Second Crop), Pumpkins, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Leeks, Lettuce, Peas, Courgettes, Beetroot	Apples, Tomatoes (Greenhouse), Pears, Grapes, Melons
<b>November</b>	Pumpkins, Brussels Sprouts, Leeks	Apples (Late), Pears (Late), Cranberries
<b>December</b>	Brussels Sprouts, Leeks, Winter Cabbages, Parsnips, Swedes	-
Herbs can mostly be harvested throughout the main UK growing season (late Spring through to early Autumn).		

# Making Compost

Compost is important for growing healthy crops on an allotment because it adds nutrients to the soil that are essential in supporting a range of plant functions. Many allotment gardeners choose to make their own compost, using up surplus waste. So, what will you need to make your own compost on your allotment?

## Green organic matter

should make up around half of your compost heap as this will **decompose** quickly and help to nourish the microbes turning your waste into compost.

Examples of this include:

- fruit and vegetables
- uncooked kitchen waste
- grass cuttings
- green leaves

Try researching other green organic matter that you could compost.

**Compost bins** come in varying shapes and sizes and can be made of either plastic or wood. Essentially, you just need a container that has a lid (this is important to prevent water creating a soggy mess) and a closing outlet at the bottom.

**Brown organic matter** can vary from twigs and wood chippings, brown leaves and stems to shredded paper, card and straw.

Turn your compost heap regularly to ensure the different matter is well mixed and to add air to your mixture. This is essential in making better compost.

What other brown organic matter can be composted?

Think carefully about the position of your compost bin on your allotment – too warm or cold a position prevents the **bacteria** turning your waste into compost while too little or too much humidity stops the **micro-organisms** from decomposing the waste.

It is best if the base of your compost bin is sitting on soil rather than a hard base as this will allow it to drain easily and will get the **decaying** process started much quicker.



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# Glossary

## Bacteria

A form of micro-organism.

## Micro-organism

A microscopic living thing.

## Brown organic matter

Matter from the remains of plants or animals high in carbon.

## Nutrient

The substances required by plants and other living things to function, e.g. survive and grow.

## Compost

The substance produced through composting (the recycling of organic matter through decomposition).

## Compost bin

A container, often made of wood or plastic, where organic waste is recycled to make compost.

## Decaying

The process whereby organic matter is broken down.

## Decompos

To break down organic matter.

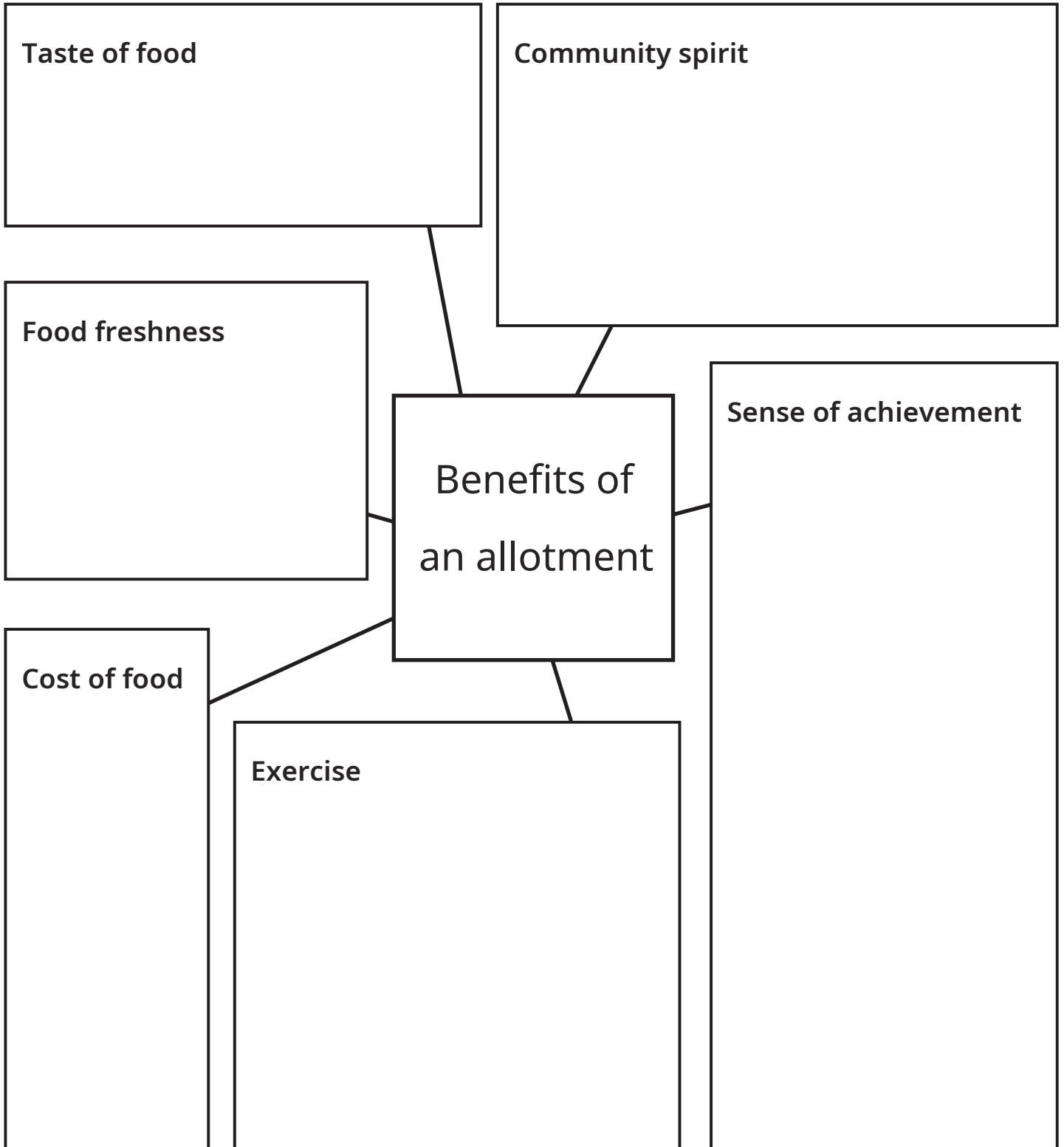
## Green organic matter

Matter from the remains of plants or animals high in nitrogen.



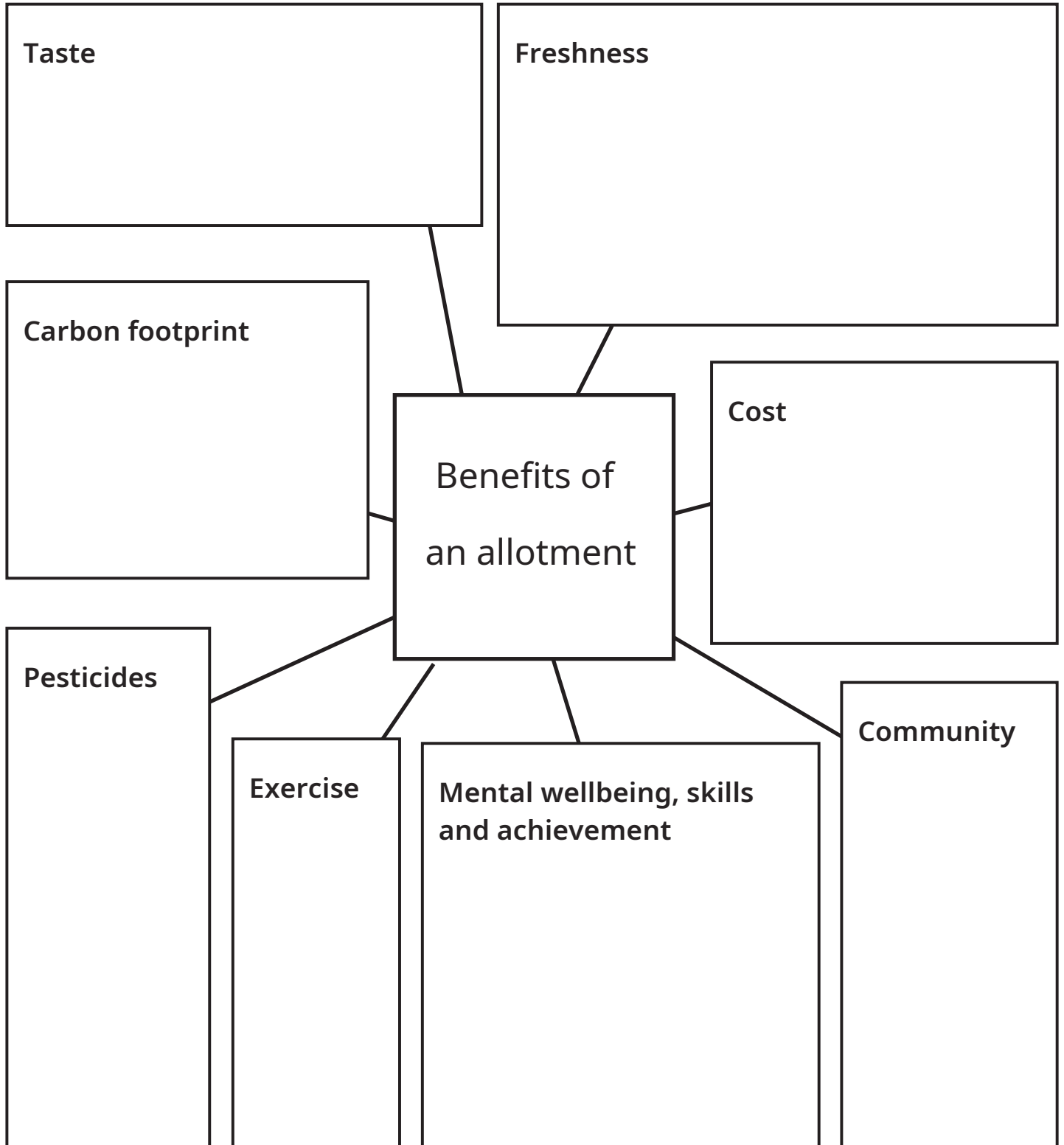
# Benefits of an Allotment Mind Map

Think carefully about the benefits of creating your own allotment and mind-map them here. (Use the sub-headings to help you.)



# Benefits of an Allotment Mind Map

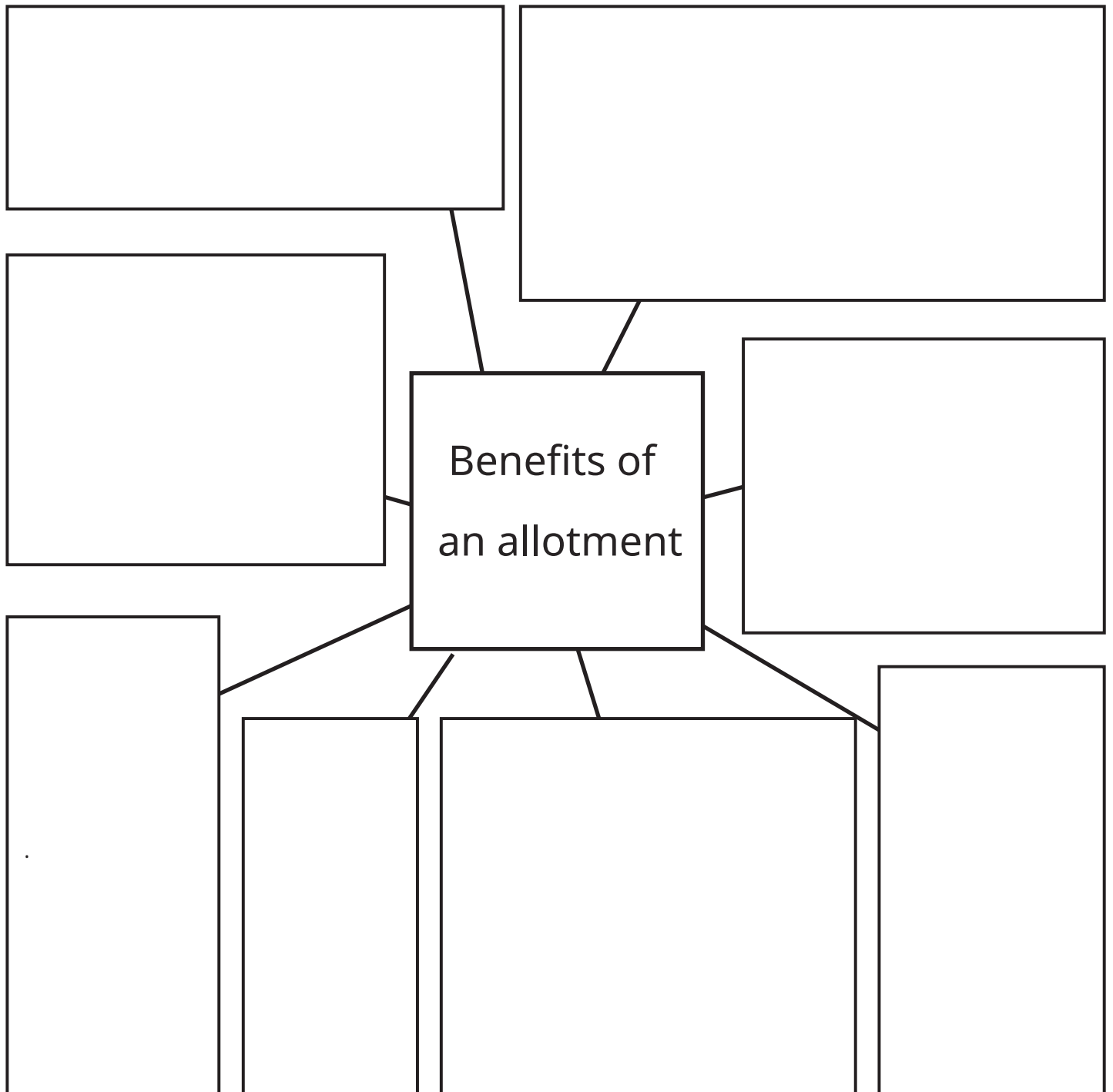
Think carefully about the benefits of creating your own allotment and mind-map them here. (Use the subheadings to help you.)



# Benefits of an Allotment Mind Map

Think carefully about the benefits of creating your own allotment and mind-map them here.

Consider themes like food, time, health, costs and community.



Are there any disadvantages to creating an allotment?

Identify any drawbacks and try to find an advantage above that counteracts each one.

# My Allotment Diary

Once you have planted your allotment, look carefully at the monthly tasks and plant calendar to know what you need to do each month to maintain your plot and harvest the crops. Keep a diary here of all the tasks you carry out. You might want to sketch your observations or record measurements as your plants grow.

**Month:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Seeds Sown and Plants Planted**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Crops Ready to Harvest**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**General Tasks**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Observations and Measurements**



# Allotment Research

Allotments are a popular way to grow your own food, spend time outdoors in the fresh air, save money on fresh produce and engage with local people, helping to develop community spirit!

But what planning and effort need to go into creating your own plot?

Use the Internet to find out more about the features of allotment gardening and then, add information for each of the sub-headings provided on the next page.

You could also find out about:

- how to manage your allotment in extreme weather;
- encouraging wildlife and keeping animals on your plot;
- allotment structures.



# Allotment Research

Planning and preparing the plot

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Types of soil

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Quick-growing vegetables

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Fragrant herbs

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Favoured fruit

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Useful tools

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Pest prevention

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Now you have completed your research, go back to your Allotment Plan to mark out and label your allotment planting beds.



# How to Create Compost

Use the Internet and non-fiction books to research what should and should not be used to make your own compost for your allotment.

Find at least 15 different items to put in each column.

✓ Compost Me	✓ Don't Compost Me

Challenge: use your research to try to find a reason why some of these items should not be used to make compost.

# How to Create Compost

Use the Internet and non-fiction books to research which of the items on the following page should or should not be used to make compost. Write the items in the correct column below.

✓ Compost Me	✓ Don't Compost Me

Challenge: use your research to try to find a reason why some of these items should not be used to make compost.



Banana skins



Cardboard rolls



Newspaper



Tea bags



Shredded white paper



Large branches



Bread



Fish



Metal objects



Small twigs



Tumble dryer lint



Aluminium foil



Apple cores



Potato peelings



Cooked pasta



Grass cuttings



Leaves



Meat



Orange peel



Crushed egg shells



Bones



Vacuum dust



Cooking oil



Plastic containers



Milk



Glass bottles



Cheese



Coloured paper

































Tea leaves



Sawdust

# How to Create Compost Answers

✓ Compost Me	✓ Don't Compost Me
 Potato peelings	 Meat (attracts pests)
 Apple cores	 Orange peel (too acidic)
 Cooked pasta	 Large branches (takes too long to decompose)
 Crushed egg shells	 Bones (attracts pests)
 Grass cuttings	 Fish (attracts pests)
 Shredded white paper	 Metal objects (will not decompose)
 Small twigs	 Cooking oil (fats attract pests)
 Leaves	 Plastic containers (will not decompose)
 Banana skins	 Milk (dairy attracts pests)
 Bread	 Tea bags (bags may not be natural)
 Vacuum dust	 Glass bottles (will not decompose)
 Tumble dryer lint	 Cheese (dairy attracts pests)
 Cardboard rolls	 Coloured paper (toxic dyes)
 Tea leaves	 Newspaper (toxic print)
 Sawdust	 Aluminium foil (will not decompose)

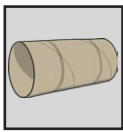
# How to Create Compost

Use the Internet and non-fiction books to research which of the items on the following page should or should not be used to make compost. Cut out each item then sort and stick them in the correct column below.

✓ Compost Me	✓ Don't Compost Me



Milk



Cardboard rolls



Fish



Leaves



Potato peelings



Apple cores



Meat



Grass cuttings



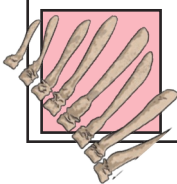
Crushed egg shells



Glass and plastic bottles




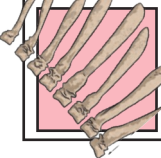






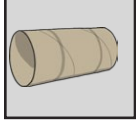
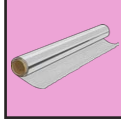


Aluminium foil



Bones

## How to Create Compost Answers

Use the Internet and non-fiction books to research which of the items on the following page should or should not be used to make compost. Cut out each item then sort and stick them into the correct column below.

✓ <b>Compost Me</b>	✓ <b>Don't Compost Me</b>
 Potato peelings	 Bones
 Apple cores	 Meat
 Leaves	 Fish
 Grass cuttings	 Glass and plastic bottles
 Cardboard rolls	 Aluminium foil
 Crushed egg shells	 Milk



Yeovil Allotments Association

[www.yeovil-allotments-association.co.uk](http://www.yeovil-allotments-association.co.uk)

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