



## Square Foot Gardening

Square foot gardening is an intensive gardening technique perfect for small areas. It was introduced by Mel Bartholomew in the early 80's with his best known book "Square Foot Gardening." In 2005 he updated his techniques and published a second book "All New Square Foot Gardening." He also has a web site [www.squarefootgardening.com](http://www.squarefootgardening.com) where further information can be found on this small space gardening option.

The basic tenets of square foot gardening according to Mel are:

1. **Layout.** Arrange your garden in squares, not rows. Lay it out in 4'x4' planting areas.
2. **Boxes.** Build boxes to hold a new soil mix above ground.
3. **Aisles.** Space boxes 3' apart to form walking aisles.
4. **Soil.** Fill boxes with Mel's special soil mix: 1/3 blended compost, 1/3 peat moss, and 1/3 coarse vermiculite.
5. **Grid.** Make a permanent square foot grid for the top of each box. A MUST
6. **Care.** NEVER WALK ON YOUR GROWING SOIL. Tend your garden from the aisles.
7. **Select.** Plant a different flower, vegetable, or herb crop in each square foot, using 1, 4, 9, or 16 plants per square foot.
8. **Plant.** Conserve seeds. Plant only a pinch (2 or 3 seeds) per hole. Place transplants in a slight saucer-shaped depression.
9. **Harvest.** When you finish harvesting a square foot, add compost and replant it with a new and different crop which is called succession planting. For instance ... spinach growing in a 1' X 1' square will be finished in June freeing up the space to use for a tomato plant.

The Demo Garden's square foot bed incorporates some of the above tenets by planting in 1' X 1' squares, utilizing a grid system laid down over top of a 4' X 10' raised bed space, growing up by using trellises and successive planting of the squares through the seasons.

Depending upon your how big your plant will be at maturity determines how many seeds or transplants are planted in a 1' X 1' square. Below are some guidelines for # of seeds or plants per square. Unless otherwise noted all seeds or plants are per 1' X 1' square (12 inches by 12 inches).

Beans, Pole - Use 4 - 1' X 1' squares to make a 4' X 4' area, Plant 8 seeds, 2 plants at each bean teepee 'leg.'  
Beans, Bush - 9 seeds  
Beets - 16 seeds  
Broccoli - 1 plant  
Carrots - Depending upon type but up to 16 seeds  
Chard, Swiss - 4 seeds  
Cucumber - 2 seeds per square but use 1' X 4' area to plant. Use a trellis at the long side so cucumbers can climb up instead of out.  
Lettuce - Up to 9 seeds but depends upon type; loose-leaf would be more than head types  
Onions - 16 seeds (bunching or scallions) or 4 sets (bulb onions)  
Parsley - 4 seeds  
Peas - 8 seeds per square  
Peppers - 1 plant  
Radishes - 16 seeds  
Spinach - 9 seeds  
Squash, Summer - Vine types - 3 seeds per 1' X 4' area; Bush - 1 seed per 3' X 3' area  
Tomato - Vine type 1 plant per 2' x 4' area