



GROWING *Sweet Peas* IN PERTH

How to Grow Sweet Peas in Perth

Sweet peas are great fun to grow. The flowers provide a cheery splash of colour in winter and the scent can be heavenly. The new varieties available mean that plants come in all different sizes. There is bound to be one suitable for everything from a small pot on a balcony to a garden bed that runs the length of a fence.

We have a full range of Yates seeds including the “Original” variety first discovered in Sicily in the 1600s. It has small flowers but the scent really knocks you over. It is a full sized variety and needs space to grow.

“Cascade” and “Old Fashioned” are traditional, brightly coloured varieties that give a great show of flowers. If you have limited space, look for the smaller semi-dwarf and dwarf varieties such as “Cupid”, “Bijou” and “Potted Fragrance”, to name a few.

The first step is to choose a good spot where your sweet peas will get good sunlight for most of the day. The tall growing varieties do need support. If you are growing them in the garden, you will need a fence or trellis to train the plants.

If you don't have a structure, then build a simple tripod or tepee using garden stakes with horizontal string lines. This is also a great way of creating support in a pot for sweet peas.

The soil needs to be rich in organic matter with quality compost and aged manure. Add slow release fertiliser and make sure the soil is slightly alkaline. The soil needs to be damp when the seeds are planted, so water the area well the day before.

Plant the seeds into the soil, cover them well and wait to see the seedlings emerge. Don't be tempted to water until after you see those little green shoots poking through the soil. A small twig can be used to mark where your seeds are planted and will give the young plants help to reach the support frame.

If you notice a whitish film on the leaves of your sweet peas, your plant may have powdery mildew. This fungal disease often attacks sweet peas. It can be controlled with a systemic fungicide, such as Yates Fungus Gun.

Sweet peas require very little ongoing care if the soil is well prepared and they are planted in the right location. The hardest task will be selecting the variety to plant and trying to stop and one or two.

General advice only. Please ask one of our Horticulturists if you require specific advice for your situation.