

GROWING PEA SHOOTS

Pea shoots are a great introduction to growing your own for children. They can be grown all year round indoors and are really easy. Using a clear plastic bottle to grow them, you can see the roots establish too. The fun thing about growing pea shoots is that you get results very quickly. What's more, they are tasty to eat and full of vitamin C and protein.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

1. Dried peas – from a seed packet or ordinary supermarket dried peas work too
2. Jug or bowl and water
3. Empty 2 litre soft drink bottle
4. Permanent marker
5. A tray or plate to capture drained water
6. Scissors
7. Compost
8. Foil or similar for covering
9. Mist sprayer or fine spray watering can
10. Optional – googly eyes and materials for decorating the planter



STEP 1

Fill a bowl or jug with cool, clean water and tip in your peas. Put plenty of water in as the peas will almost double in size when soaked! (It is not essential to soak them first but it will help to speed up the germination process.)



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STEP 2

After 24 hours drain the peas – they should be looking much bigger and plumper. They're ready for sowing.

STEP 3

Take the label off the plastic bottle and mark out the shape in the photo, taking care not to make the planter too shallow – it needs to be at least 3cm deep. It is a good idea to punch holes in the bottom to allow good drainage. We used a piece of blu-tack placed underneath and the sharp point of the scissors.



STEP 4

Bend up the ears into position and decorate the planter if desired. We used googly eyes, coloured permanent markers to colour in ears and nose and a cotton wool ball for a tail.

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STEP 5

Your planter is ready! The next step is to fill with compost, ideally seed and cutting compost, although any multi-purpose will do. Give the compost a little watering with the sprayer or watering can.



STEP 6

Sow the peas - as we are only growing shoots, the peas can be placed really close together, as a guide, leave a pea sized space between each.

Sprinkle the surface with compost, just enough to cover the peas.

Place the planter on a tray. Gently water again.

STEP 7

Cover the planter with foil or similar to keep it dark. Leave it in a warm place for 3 to 4 days. Keep it moist and after a couple of days check for shoots.



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STEP 8

As soon as shoots appear, uncover and place them on a bright windowsill.

Water regularly with a fine mist spray or a fine spray watering can.

STEP 9

After about 2 weeks you should have pea shoots about 8-10cm tall and ready to eat.

Harvest the shoots by pinching off just above the bottom leaves.



Pea shoots can be eaten alone as a healthy snack or used in a salad or stir fry. After the first harvest, don't throw away the tray, it is likely that some of the peas will sprout again giving you a second harvest! We used ours in a stir fry, just add them to your usual ingredients.