

Sowing Peas

Some gardeners start peas in guttering, so they can be sown indoors and planted out when the weather warms up. This also prevents birds and mice eating the seeds before they germinate. Peas don't like their roots disturbed, so by sowing in a shallow container the whole row can be planted out at once. Children will love using plastic bottles to follow this method in the school garden.

What you need:

- Plastic bottles or milk bottles
- Insulating tape
- Scissors
- Compost
- Pea seeds



What to do:

1. Cut the plastic bottles in half lengthways.
2. Tape one end of the bottle to keep it closed, if necessary.
3. Use the scissors to make small drainage holes in the side of the bottle halves.
4. Fill the bottle halves with compost.
5. Sow the peas on top of the compost in a zigzag pattern, approximately 5cm apart.
6. Cover the peas with compost and leave them to grow in the greenhouse.
7. When the pea shoots are around 10cm tall, they are ready to plant out. Make a channel in the soil where you want them to grow.
8. Remove the tape from one end of the bottle and push the whole block of peas into a prepared channel.

Ways to extend this activity: Use a digital camera to photograph the germination and growth of the pea seeds. Make a diary describing the growth of the pea plants. Plant some pea seeds directly outside and compare their growth over the season.

National Curriculum Links: Observe seeds. Describe how plants need water, light and a suitable temperature. Explore the requirements of plants for growth. Identify and describe the different parts of plants. Describe how plants need water, light and a suitable temperature.