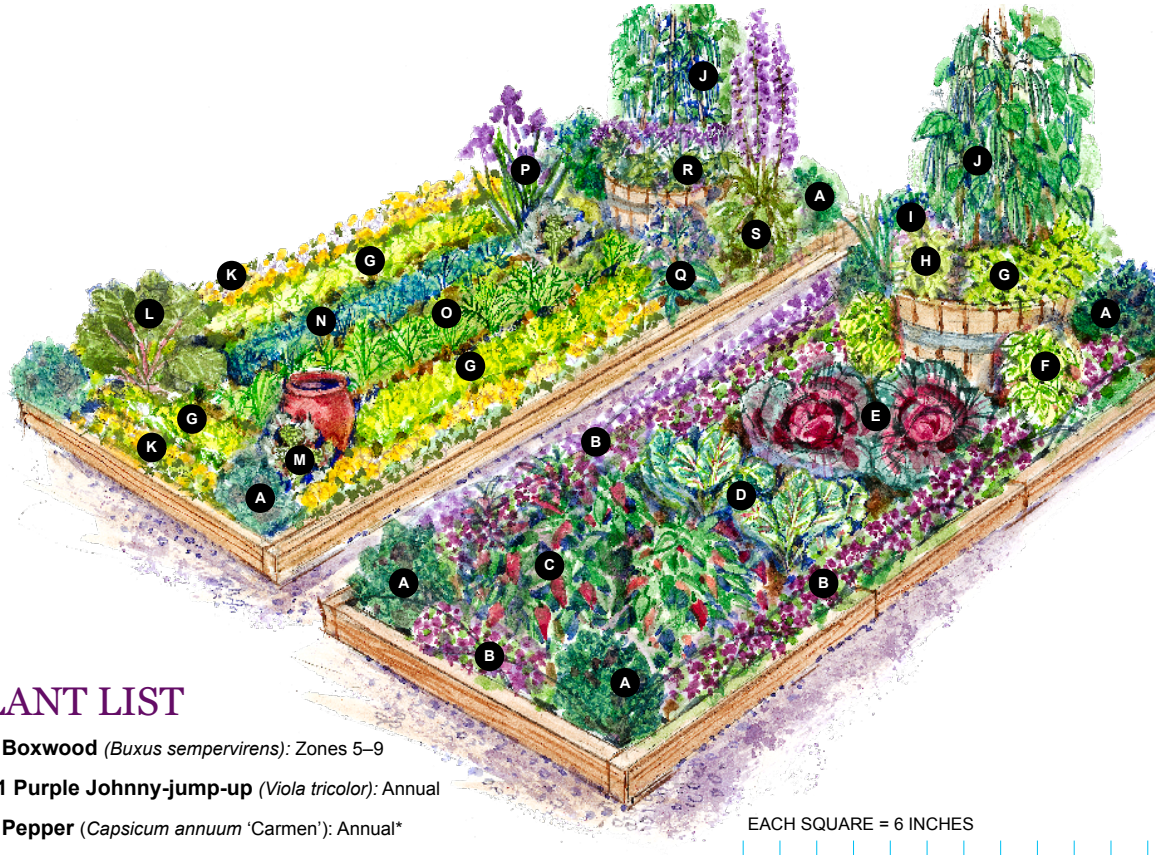
Colorful Vegetable Garden Plan

Freely mix flowers with greens to create a garden that is a feast for the palate *and* the eyes.



PLANT LIST

A. 8 Boxwood *(Buxus sempervirens):* Zones 5–9

B. 21 Purple Johnny-jump-up *(Viola tricolor):* Annual

C. 4 Pepper (*Capsicum annuum* 'Carmen'): Annual*

D. 2 Chard (*Beta vulgaris* var. *cicla* 'Fordhook Giant'): Annual

E. 2 Red cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* 'Ruby Ball'): Annual

F. 2 Lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis* 'Aurea'): Zones 4–11

G. 19 Loose-leaf lettuce (*Lactuca sativa* 'Royal Oak Leaf'): Annual

H. 1 Golden oregano (*Origanum vulgare* 'Aureum'): Zones 5–11

I. 5 Onion (*Allium cepa* 'Copra'): Annual

J. 10 Pole bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* 'Fortex'): Annual

K. 22 White and yellow Johnny-jump-up *(Viola tricolor):* Annual

L. 1 Rhubarb (*Rheum rhabarbarum* 'Valentine'): Zones 2–9

M. 2 Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea* 'Packman'): Annual

N. 3 Parsley *(Petroselinum crispum):* Biennial grown as annual

O. 15 Carrot (*Daucus carota sativum* 'Scarlet Nantes'): Annual

P. 1 Purple bearded iris (*Iris* 'Hello Darkness'): Zones 3–10

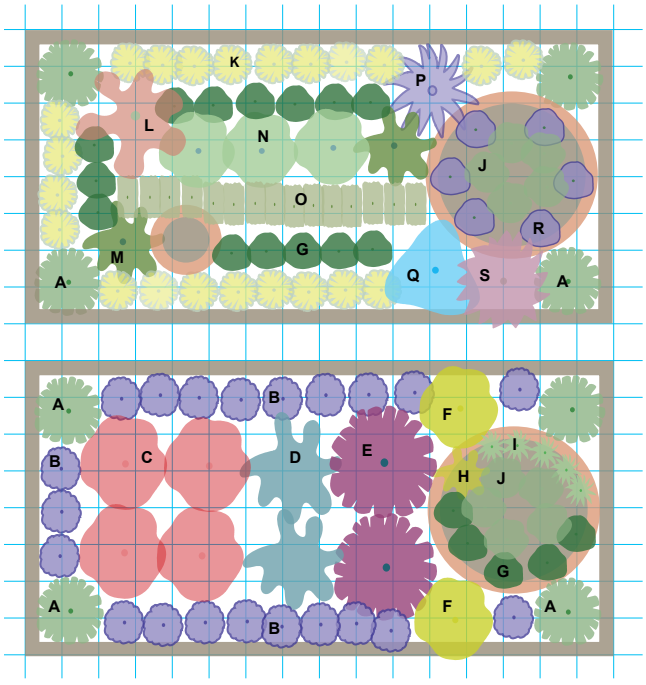
Q. 1 Borage *(Borago officinalis):* Annual

R. 6 Heliotrope (*Heliotropium arborescens* 'Marine'): Annual

S. 1 *Delphinium elatum* 'Pacific Giant': Zones 4–8

*Note: Plant peppers after all danger of frost is past.

EACH SQUARE = 6 INCHES



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Tips for Installing Your Garden

Before You Begin

Preparation is the key to creating a garden that will offer a lifetime of pleasure. Before you head to the nursery, review all garden plan materials. Ask yourself the following questions:

- **Do I have a suitable spot for this plan?** The layout diagram shows the dimensions for the plan. In general, you can enlarge or reduce the size of the garden by adding or eliminating plants, although the character of the garden may change if you alter the size dramatically.
- **Do I have the right growing conditions?** Check the plant list to see if the plan will do best in sun, part shade, or full shade. Be sure the plants are suited to your USDA Zone.
- **Do I need to amend my soil?** Most plants thrive in moist but well-drained soil. If you have soil with lots of sand or clay, amend it liberally with lots of organic matter, such as compost.
- **Is my soil's pH and fertility okay?** If you're unsure, inquire about testing at your county's extension service office. Follow the recommendations that come with your test results if you need to correct the soil's pH (how acid or alkaline the soil is) or fertility.

Create the Bed

To lay out your bed, use a garden hose to mark the outline. (Sprinkle flour along the hose for a temporary mark.). Using a sharp spade, dig along the marked line to set the edge of your bed.

If the spot is currently covered by lawn, remove the sod using a straight-edged shovel or sod cutter. To make this easier, wet the area thoroughly, then use the shovel to cut the lawn into strips that are the width of the shovel and about 3 feet long. (Sharpen the edge of your shovel frequently with a file.) Use the shovel to pry up and roll back the strips of sod. Once the sod is removed, loosen the underlying soil with a shovel or a power tiller.

Regardless of how you prepare your bed, use this opportunity to mix in organic matter (such as compost, peat moss, or rotted manure) and loosen the soil at least 6 inches deep. Don't mix in fertilizer unless your soil test shows a need; in general, excessive amounts of fertilizer will do more harm than good.

After your bed is prepared, water it thoroughly and wait a week. This will allow weed seeds to germinate. Pull these seedlings or dig them back into the soil. Or spray them with an herbicide. Follow the instructions on the packaging, including the time to wait after application before planting.

Planting

If you have all of your plants on hand, keep them in their pots and set them out on the planting bed. This will give you a preview of how the bed will look, and allow you to make adjustments before digging any holes.

When you are satisfied with the placement, plant your garden from largest to smallest container (usually trees first, then shrubs, perennials, and annuals).

- **Tree-Planting Tips:** Dig a hole that's twice as wide as the pot or root ball but no deeper. If the tree is potted, loosen the soil slightly around the roots, then place the tree into the planting hole. For balled-and-burlapped trees, loosen the burlap after the tree is in the hole. Cut away as much of the burlap as possible. When the tree is in place and straight, fill the hole one-third with soil, tap firmly to make good contact between roots and soil, then water. Repeat twice more until the hole is filled. Water the tree thoroughly by letting a hose run slowly for 30 minutes.
- **Shrub-Planting Tips.** Plant shrubs in a hole that's about twice the diameter of the root ball. The top of the root ball should be slightly above the surrounding soil level. Backfill with garden soil, taping firmly to ensure contact between soil and roots. Water immediately by slowly running a hose at the shrub's base for about 20 minutes.
- **Perennial- and Annual-Planting Tips.** Set these plants in soil at the same level they were growing in the pot. Firm the soil around each plant with your hands, then water thoroughly.

Edging

Beds and borders are easier to maintain if they're edged to keep surrounding grass or weeds from growing in. Choose plastic, metal, stone, or brick—whatever you prefer. If you have lawn around your bed, consider adding a 6- to 12 inch-wide swath of masonry or stone set even with the surrounding soil to act as a mowing strip.

Mulching

Mulch your garden after planting. Mulch conserves moisture, cools the soil, and protects against water runoff and erosion. Organic mulches such as shredded bark need to be topped off every couple of years as the mulch decays. Mulches such as crushed stone are more permanent, but they do not improve your soil over time.

Aftercare

The first season of growth is the most critical. Water thoroughly every other day for the first two weeks, then give your garden about an inch of water a week for the rest of the season. The following year, you can let nature take its course, supplementing dry periods with deep watering.

You also should be diligent about weeding your bed during the first year.

As the plants mature and fill in, there will be fewer opportunities for weeds to grow. A thick layer of mulch will also help keep weeds in check.

Ongoing Maintenance

Most plants will thrive with minimal care. If you need to prune trees or shrubs to maintain their shape or size, do it in late winter before growth has started. The exception to this general rule is spring-flowering shrubs like lilacs that should be pruned immediately after flowering.

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