

# Planning your Salad Celebration Garden

Use this chart to determine the planting dates of all of your favorite vegetables so that you can harvest them at the same time for a salad-bration! You can check your seed packets for the number of 'Days to Maturity', otherwise known as 'Days to Harvest'. Remember, this date is usually based on the date of germination or when the first 'true leaves' appear, not from the date of planting the seed.



## But, is it exact?

Days to Maturity can vary due to several factors, such as temperature of the soil, inconsistent water or plant stress from pests or disease. Your growing conditions will never be perfect, but under reasonable conditions, you can expect the 'Days to Maturity' number on the seed packet to be an accurate gauge. We are going to add 10 days to our expected harvest date to ensure plants are mature and fruiting for our salad-bration.

## How many days are there from planting to germination to first true leaves?

Again, this time frame depends upon environmental factors, such as temperature, seed and moisture. If you are using a heating pad, you can subtract several days, as seeds will germinate more quickly. Under reasonable growing conditions, you can use the following number of days as an estimate for the number of days from seeding to germination to first true leaves:

## What are the 'First True Leaves'?

As a vegetable seedling grows, the cotyledons (the first leaves you saw, known as the seed leaves) will wither and what are called the first "true" leaves will form. This is when your seedling begins actively photosynthesizing.

Cotyledons, known as seed leaves



**Tomato** 30 days

**Basil** 25 days

**Kale** 18 days

**Cucumber** 25 days

**Nasturtium** 18 days

**Chard** 18 days

**Bell Pepper** 30 days

**Beans** 18 days

**Loose leaf lettuce** 8 days

**Parsley** 25 days

**Peas** 15 days

## Find your planning chart on the back of this document, and follow these simple steps to plan your salad celebration garden!

1. First, decide on the date of your salad-bration and write it at the top of the page.
2. Decide what vegetables you would like in your salad and input their Days to Maturity. You should be able to find this number on your seed packet, or you can do a quick internet search for the variety of vegetable.
3. In the next column, add the days to germination or first true leaves to your Days to Maturity.
4. Add 10 days onto that number in the next column!
5. Now, simply count back from your salad-bration date and that's your correct date for planting. Track any notes on your record about the actual number of days to harvest, so that you will be even more prepared next year!

# Salad Celebration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Plant Name	Days to Maturity	Add # days to first true leaves	Add 10 days	Date for Planting (count backwards from your celebration date)	Notes

