

Garden Tower Growing Instructions

This is a summary intended to assist with the running of the Garden Tower after the initial setup is complete.

Getting the Tower Ready

- If not done already, fill tower with a high quality potting soil. It takes about 225 liters (6 cubic feet) of soil maximum.
- Set up the grow lights on their stands evenly spaced around the tower. Plug all the lights into a timer that is set to turn on from 6 AM to 8 PM or so.
- Thoroughly soak the soil. Check after a couple of hours if water has started accumulating in the collection tray and if so stop adding water.

Growing Plants

- Start seeds in starter plugs or trays according to instructions.
- Place them near a window or under a dome with a grow light on top. Keep the grow light on during the day. Use the small dome until plants touch the top, then switch to the larger dome.
- Keep the starter plugs moist at all times by adding water to the holding tray.
- Transplant into tower once seedlings are a couple of inches tall and roots start to emerge from starter plug. Water well in the tower for the first couple of days!
- NOTE: You do not need to transplant all plants at the same time. Just transplant each plant when it is ready.

Vermicomposting

- You should start your vermicompost as soon as your tower is fully set up. The sooner it works the sooner you will get the benefit of the nutrients it produces.
- Add about 0.5 pounds of red wigglers to the central tube.
- Cut up food scraps and add on top. The smaller the scraps are the easier it is for the worms to eat it. Add some crushed egg shell about once a week.
- ALWAYS top off with a plug of dead leaves or other “brown” material, such as shredded paper.
- Keep topping up the tube with diced food scraps and brown matter as the old matter settles with the worms doing their work.
- For further help with the vermicompost see the vermicomposting guide.

Plant Maintenance and Harvest

- Thin plants if they get too crowded.
- Start harvesting large leaves for lettuce, chard, etc. as they grow – this way the plants will produce longer.
- If necessary rotate the tower a bit every day to ensure all plants get good lighting at least some of the time.
- Add water to the tower (pour on top soil layer) when it starts to feel dry. Check the drawer regularly for collected compost tea and add that first.