

# Spring gardening tips

## Even the most gardening-averse can feel when spring is in the air!

Blossoms and birds are accompanied by rapid growth of lawns and weeds. Warmth-lovers like tomatoes, beans and pumpkins need to wait until the soil really warms up (after Labour Day) before planting them outside, but leafy greens like lettuce, peas, celery, silverbeet and cabbage can go in earlier.

Spring is the season for all things green and crispy – lettuce, peas, parsley, coriander, spinach and silverbeet all love moist, cool conditions.

### Set your garden up for the rest of the year

Gather as much organic material as you can find – straw, leaves, grass clippings, seaweed, manure – and either lay it directly on your beds or pile it up, to rot into compost. The more organic matter in your soil, the better it will hold water over the summer, meaning healthier plants and less watering for you.

### Keep one step ahead of the weeds

Pulling them out before they go to seed, and then covering the soil surface in mulch, will save a huge amount of work later in summer.

### Make compost

Pile up your prunings, lawn clippings, manure and wood chips. Weeds can be added if they don't have seeds or thick roots – most home heaps don't get hot enough to kill these. Cover with a sack or some cardboard and it should be ready for your autumn plantings.



### Plant shrubs, perennials, herbs and grasses

There is still usually enough wet weather for them to get their roots well established before summer dries out the soil.

### Sow

Peas, any greens, early tomatoes and beans. Coriander, carrots and beets can be sown outside once apple trees are in blossom.

### Plant

Garlic, borage, calendula, greens (bok choy, cabbage, silverbeet, lettuce, miner's lettuce, land cress).

Gardening tips thanks to Common Unity Project Aotearoa [commonunityproject.org.nz](http://commonunityproject.org.nz)

