



Growing Guide

Step 1: Find a Suitable Pumpkin Patch Location - Your location should be sunny, well drained, easily accessible, and offer protection from the wind. You will also want a large area of at least 2.5 X 2.5 metres and easily accessible water.

Step 2: Prepare Your Patch - Work up your soil, removing all weeds and any grass, and work in mature compost. If there is no shelter, you can build a windbreak to protect your plants.

Step 3: Planting - You can either start your plants in pots, or you can sow them directly in your pumpkin patch location after the risk of frost has passed in your area. We recommend direct seeding, but if you wish to get a head start with indoor planting in pots, use paper or fibre pots which can be placed directly in the soil.

Step 4: Pollination - Approximately 50 days after starting your seeds, pollination can occur! You can pollinate by hand using a paintbrush to move pollen from male to female flowers, or you can let nature do the work. The male flowers will appear before female flowers. Female flowers will have the start of a small pumpkin at the base of the flower.

Step 5: Picking Your Pumpkins - Let pumpkins grow to the size of a basketball, then choose your top two pumpkin picks and remove the rest. Choosing pumpkins on the main vine is usually best.

Step 6: Caring for your Pumpkins - Consistent watering and weeding will help your pumpkin grow. You can also provide shade for your pumpkin by covering it with an old sheet. Bury vines to create more roots, allowing your plant to get more nutrients and grow larger. Fertilizing your pumpkin will also support more growth. Seaweed or fish based fertilizers work well.

Step 7: Watch it Grow! - Be sure to use the accompanying tracking sheet to track your pumpkins growth and share the results with us using #4HSPumpkins

