

PEAS

SQUARE FOOT PLANTING: 8 plants per square foot

SEED DEPTH: 1 inch **GERMINATION:** 14 days

GROWTH

- Climbing varieties of peas save space and do not require successive plants.
- Typically, peas require the removal of their pod, a process called shucking or shelling, but snap peas are popular for their sweetness and convenient, edible pod.

HARVEST

- Harvest peas regularly; this encourages the plant to develop more pods.
- If you have planted shelling peas they will be ready to pick when the pea pods are swollen.
- Sugar snap peas are at their best when the pods first start to fatten, but before they become too large. Snow peas are harvested before the peas have grown and the pods are nearly flat.
- Use both hands to harvest edible pods. Hold plant stem with one hand and use the other hand to pull off pod. Be gentle, and avoid damaging the plant

stem so that it can continue to produce.

- Peas are at their absolute best immediately after harvest, as the sugars in the pea rapidly convert to starch which ultimately reduces flavor and sweetness.

STORAGE

- Pea pods can be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for about 1 week.
- Peas freeze well, but will lose their crunchy texture. Blanch all types of peas for 2 minutes (shell peas must be shelled first), rinse under cold water, drain well, and pack into airtight containers such as freezer bags.

USE

- Shelled peas can be used raw in stews, soups, mixed vegetable sautés, and stir fries, or can be blanched or steamed.
- Some snap peas need stringing. Snap off stem tip toward the flat side of pod and pull downward. Young, fresh, snap peas are delicious raw, or pods may be cooked very briefly (2 min.) and added to salads, deep fried in tempura batter, steamed, or sautéed.

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MORE ON GROWING PEAS

[Seed Savers' Exchange: Which Trellis Is the Best Trellis?](#)

SEED SAVING

To save pea seeds for next year, leave a handful of pods on the vine and allow them to dry completely. Once dry, shell the peas and store in a cool, dry place. The back of the refrigerator in sealed plastic bags or mason jars works best. Don't forget to label and date your seeds!