



A CLARA BENNETT GARDEN GUIDE

Small Space Garden Starter Kit



Five printables to get your first container garden growing
— your free companion to *Small Space, Big Harvest*.

SUNLIGHT TRACKER · CONTAINER SIZES · CROP SPACING
WATERING LOG · YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS



THE ALMANAC HOUSE · AN IMPRINT OF CONFLUENCE MEDIA GROUP

READ YOUR SPACE FIRST

Sunlight Tracker

Sun is the one budget you can't fake. On a clear day, check each spot every couple of hours and tick the times direct light actually *lands* there — not where it's bright, where the sun hits. Six ticks is roughly six hours.

SPOT / CORNER	8 AM	10 AM	12 PM	2 PM	4 PM	6 PM	SUN HRS

WHAT YOUR HOURS WILL GROW

Under 4 h	Leafy greens & herbs only — no tomatoes
4–6 h	Lettuce, spinach, chard, kale, radishes, most herbs
6–8 h	Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beans, squash

ORIENTATION IS A HINT, NOT THE TRUTH

South — most sun & heat. **West** — strong, hot afternoon. **East** — gentle morning, kind to greens. **North** — hardest; herbs & greens. The building across the street doesn't read a compass, so trust what you tick above.



MATCH THE POT TO THE CROP

Container Size Cheat Sheet

The smallest pot each crop is happy in — take it to the garden center. Bigger is almost always more forgiving; more soil holds more water and buffers a missed day.

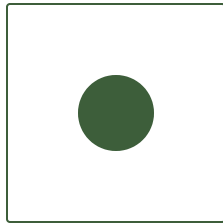
CROP	SUN	SMALLEST POT THAT WORKS — SIZE & DEPTH
LEAFY GREENS, ROOTS & HERBS · 4-6 H SUN		
Leaf lettuce	4-6 h	1-3 gal · 6 in deep
Spinach	4-6 h	1-3 gal · 6 in deep
Arugula	4-6 h	1-3 gal · 6 in deep
Radish	4-6 h	1-3 gal · 6 in deep
Beets	4-6 h	1-3 gal · 8 in deep
Carrots	4-6 h	Deep pot · 10-12 in deep
Herbs (basil, chives, parsley)	4-6 h	1-3 gal · 6-8 in deep
Swiss chard	4-6 h	4-6 gal · 8-12 in deep
Kale	4-6 h	4-6 gal · 8-12 in deep
Peas (snap / snow)	4-6 h	4-6 gal + trellis · 8-10 in
FRUITING CROPS · 6-8 H SUN		
Bush beans	6-8 h	4-6 gal · 8-12 in deep
Pepper	6-8 h	4-6 gal · 8-12 in deep
Eggplant	6-8 h	4-6 gal · 8-12 in deep
Bush cucumber	6-8 h	4-6 gal + trellis · 10-12 in
Compact & cherry tomato	6-8 h	5+ gal · 12 in deep

● *The rule behind the table: small crops want 1-3 gallons, medium 4-6, large 8-10 — and every container needs drainage holes.*

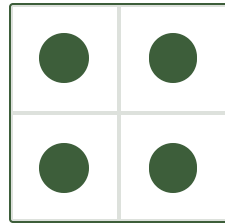


Crop Spacing Quick Chart

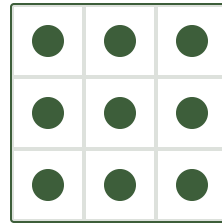
How many plants fit in one square foot — or one pot. Picture the square split into a grid and set one plant in each cell: close enough to shade out weeds, far enough to thrive.



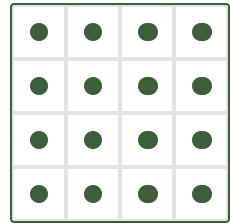
1
PER POT
Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant



4
PER SQUARE
Lettuce, chard, kale



9
PER SQUARE
Spinach, beans, beets, arugula



16
PER SQUARE
Radishes, carrots

PLANTS PER SQUARE	CROPS
16	Radishes, carrots
9	Spinach, arugula, bush beans, beets
4	Leaf lettuce, Swiss chard, kale (1 if grown to full size)
1 per pot	Tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, bush cucumber
8 on a trellis	Peas (snap / snow), spaced along the support
1 per small pot	Herbs — basil, chives, parsley; cut as needed

● *Set trellises and stakes in at planting — not after the vine is already flopping.*



Watering Log

Plants don't drink by the calendar, so throw away the fixed daily schedule. Read the soil instead — these three habits prevent both the drowning and the drought.

1 · TEST, DON'T GUESS

Push a finger an inch or two into the soil. Dry at the tip? Water. Still damp? Wait.

2 · WATER DEEPLY

Pour until it runs from the drainage holes, then let the top inch dry before the next drink.

3 · MORNING, ON THE SOIL

Water early and onto the soil — not the leaves. Wet leaves overnight invite disease.

DATE	SPOT / CROP	SOIL (DRY / DAMP)	WATERED	NOTES

● *Overwatering kills more container plants than drought does. Mulch cuts watering nearly in half — and a plant wilting at two o'clock is often just hot, so finger-test before you reach for the can.*



Your First 30 Days

From a bare patch of concrete to your first salad — in the order that actually works. Tick each box as you go; skip none of the steps that quietly decide a season.

DAYS 1-3 · READ YOUR SPACE

- Map the real hours of direct sun each spot gets — fill in the Sunlight Tracker.

- On a balcony? Mind the weight limit; keep the heaviest pots near the wall.

- Note your wind exposure and how far away the tap is.

- Renting or in a condo? Ask about planter rules before you buy.

DAYS 4-7 · SET IT UP

- Choose your vessels: one 4×4 bed *or* three good pots — not a full build-out.

- Match the pot to the crop (Container Size sheet); drainage holes on every one.

- Fill with quality potting mix — never garden soil; mix in slow-release feed.

- Look up your frost dates and USDA zone; keep them on a card with your seeds.

WEEK 2 · PLANT

- Pick crops that fit your sun, your season, and your appetite.

- Look for “bush,” “dwarf,” “patio,” or “container” on the packet.

- Plant at the spacing on the Crop Spacing chart.

- Put trellises and stakes in *at planting* — not after the vine flops.

WEEKS 3-4 · TEND

- Finger-test before watering; water deeply, in the morning.

- Mulch the surface to cut watering nearly in half.

- Thin seedlings to the spacing they need — crowded plants stay small.

- Watch for pests and pick them off early; plan your next sowing.

● *Most people only mean to do this. In a month you'll have grown food on a patch of concrete — go pick something for dinner.*



KEEP GOING

When You're Ready for More



THE FULL BOOK

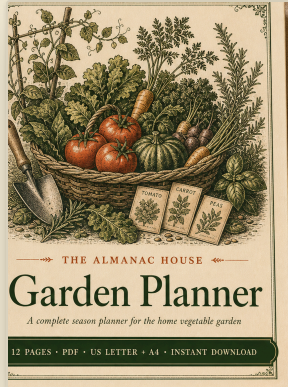
Small Space, Big Harvest

Grow real food in containers, raised beds & small spaces

Everything this kit gets you started on, finished — choosing crops, spacing and succession, watering, and harvesting from containers and raised beds all season long.

GET THE BOOK →

confluencemediagroup.net/almanac-house/authors/clara-bennett



RUN A WHOLE SEASON

The Almanac House Garden Planner

When you're ready to run a whole season — frost dates, a scaled bed map, succession sowing, a reusable monthly plan, and the logs that turn one good year into ten.

FIND IT ON ETSY →

thealmanachouse.etsy.com

More from Clara Bennett — her companion guide *Edible Flowers for Small Spaces* and other small-space gardening titles at confluencemediagroup.net/almanac-house/authors/clara-bennett, and her printable garden planners & logs at thealmanachouse.etsy.com.



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