

FIRST TUNNELS

Sowing & Growing in Your Polytunnel Month by Month

We will look in more depth about what to do in your polytunnel throughout the year and what you can sow and grow in your polytunnel each month. This guide will help you to plan your gardening year and help you to give a form and structure to your polytunnel planting plan.

January

Even in the depths of winter, a polytunnel can be crammed with edible produce. Though little will be in active growth, plenty will still be harvest-able over the coldest months. With a polytunnel, you won't have to sit inside and dream of spring but can enjoy gardening out of the elements even when the weather outside precludes any gardening activities outdoors.

Make it your New Year's resolution to get out into your polytunnel and make the most of the growing space. Plan for the year ahead and think about what you would like to sow and grow now and throughout the year. If you do not yet have a polytunnel, now is a great time to get started. You have some time to get things together before the main sowing drive of the spring.

Jobs for January in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Think about seeds – start thinking about ordering any new seeds you need to sow in spring.
- [ ] Store water containers in the under cover space or take other measures to add thermal mass and stave off the frost.
- [ ] Consider making a home-made propagator to give seeds a good start.
- [ ] Plant fruit trees (dwarf varieties could be an option in a polytunnel) during the dormant period. Plant bare root raspberry canes or fruit bushes.
- [ ] Prune existing trees or fruit bushes to keep them in good shape.
- [ ] Check plants for diseased or damaged material and remove where necessary.
- [ ] Provide extra protection for overwintering plants in the form of cloches, row covers or mini polytunnels if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest winter crops (listed below).
  Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.

What Could Be Growing?

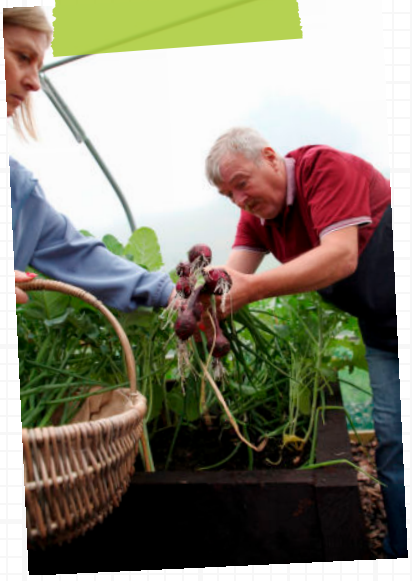
- Garlic/ elephant garlic
- Overwintered broad beans
- Overwintered peas
- Kohlrabi
- Sprouting broccoli
- Raspberries & other soft fruits
- Everything on the harvest list below:

What Can I Sow?

- Broad Beans
- Round Early Peas
- Garlic/ Elephant Garlic
- Turnips
- Tomatoes *
  (Inside or in a heated propagator)
- Peppers *
  (Inside or in a heated propagator)
- First early potatoes (chit, and consider planting in your polytunnel towards the end of the month).

What Can I Harvest?

- Winter Cabbage/ Kale
- Cauliflower
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Chard
- Asian Greens
  (pak choi, mizuna, mibuna etc..)
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Winter Lettuce
- Spring onions
- Leeks



February

February is the time when winter really begins to drag on. With a polytunnel, spring arrives much earlier than it does in an outside garden. But this month, winter still reigns. Nonetheless, there is plenty to be getting on with in your polytunnel, and even at this time of year, there will be plenty of fresh food available if you planned well the previous year. If you are just getting started, there are already a number of things you can sow.

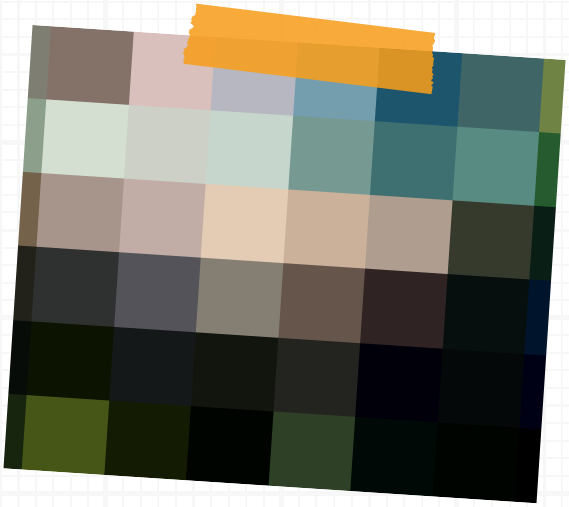
If you are new to polytunnel gardening, it is not too late to get started. February can be a great time to erect a new polytunnel, and you still have time to get ready before spring bursts onto the scene. Take stock this month and order any seeds you still need for the growing season ahead. On a sunny day this month, you can already feel the polytunnel beginning to warm.

Jobs for February in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Order seeds if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Continue to provide winter protection for overwintering plants.
- [ ] Continue to plant fruit trees and shrubs during the dormant season.
- [ ] If you have not already done so, prune fruit trees and bushes before active growth recommences.
- [ ] Protect the blossom of apricots, peaches and nectarines from frost.
- [ ] Place a thick layer of mulch or leaf mould around fruit trees but avoid piling up too much around the truck as this could cause rotting or other problems.
- [ ] Weed and prepare empty polytunnel vegetable beds with a thick layer of compost.
- [ ] Consider preparing structures for vertical gardening and plant support in your polytunnel.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest winter crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the ‘what can I sow’ section below.

What Could Be Growing?

- Garlic/ Elephant Garlic
- Peas
- Broad Beans
- Turnips
- Kohlrabi
- Sprouting broccoli
- Tomatoes *
  (Indoors or in a heated propagator)
- Peppers *
  (Indoors or in a heated propagator)
- First early potatoes (chitting or in polytunnel growing areas with protection)
- Raspberries or other soft fruits
- Everything on the harvesting list found below.



What Can I Harvest?

- Winter Cabbage/ Kale
- Cauliflower
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Chard
- Asian Greens
  (pak choi, mizuna, mibuna etc..)
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Winter Lettuce
- Spring onions
- Leeks

What Can I Sow?

- Broad Beans
- Round Early Peas
- Garlic/ Elephant Garlic
- Turnips
- Tomatoes *
  (Inside or in a heated propagator, if you have not already done so)
- Peppers *
  (Inside or in a heated propagator, if you have not already done so)
- First early potatoes (chit, if you have not already done so, plant out in polytunnel growing areas or containers in your polytunnel when chits are around 1-2cm long).

March

March is a busy time in your polytunnel. Spring has arrived and while the weather outside may still be rather chilly, inside your polytunnel things are beginning to warm up and overwintering plants are springing back into life, many bolting and beginning to go to seed. There is plenty going on in a polytunnel and loads of jobs to do, but gardening inside a polytunnel means that you can get on with them in comfort, without being exposed to the chill winds of the season.

Never is it more important to observe the conditions where you live than in March. Pay close attention to what the weather is doing and to the temperatures on a given year. Don't be seduced by a sunny day into sowing or planting out too early. Make sure you have adequate ventilation in your polytunnel and up your watering, but remember, winter can still make a resurgence and a sudden cold snap can undo your hard work. Be prepared and make sure you still have extra winter protection on hand.

Jobs for March in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Clear out or harvest winter salad crops that have begun to bolt.
- [ ] Spread compost or manure onto your vegetable beds and/or dig in green manures that have been in the beds over the winter months.
- [ ] Remove any weeds that have popped up and prepare your polytunnel growing areas for seed planting.
- [ ] Consider creating a wildlife pond close to your polytunnel and take other measures to attract wildlife.
- [ ] Sow annual flowers in seed trays/containers for planting out in June.
- [ ] Prepare vertical garden structures and staging for your polytunnel if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Install a rainwater harvesting system if you have not already done so, so you are prepared for the increased watering needs of plants over the warmer months.
- [ ] Consider spring cleaning your polytunnel.
- [ ] Plant strawberry plants in your polytunnel.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.



What Could Be Growing?

- Peas
- Broad Beans
- First Early Potatoes
- Tomatoes (seedlings, with protection or indoors)
- Peppers (seedlings, with protection or indoors)
- Raspberries of other soft fruits
- Everything on the sowing and harvesting lists.

What Can I Harvest?

- Spring Cabbage/ Kale
- Cauliflower
- Sprouting Broccoli
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions

What Can I Sow?

- Aubergines
- Tomatoes (if you have not already done so)
- Peas (if you have not already done so)
- Broad beans ((if you have not already done so)
- Cabbage
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Celeriac
- Chard
- Spinach
- Parsnips
- Lettuce
- Leeks
- Spring Onions
- Rocket
- Radishes
- Onions (plant sets in growing areas)

April

April showers are not a concern in a polytunnel, but watering and ventilation are vitally important as the weather warms. April can be an unpredictable month and although spring in your polytunnel has well and truly arrived, it is important not to be lulled into a false sense of security when it comes to the temperatures. Though things will likely be heating up, cold snaps can still happen and it is important to keep the winter protection on hand and to be prepared for a late frost.

April is a time of transition in your polytunnel, when the winter and early spring crops make way for those of the 'hungry gap' and the summer. If you have not already created a planting plan for the year, you definitely need to do so this month. Make sure you think about crop rotation and companion planting when determining how you can produce food throughout the rest of the year. If you planned well for the 'hungry gap' you should still have plenty to eat from your polytunnel this month. Keep sowing, and continue to prepare for the main growing season that lies ahead.

Jobs for April in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Prepare existing vegetable beds by adding compost if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Consider building new raised beds or growing areas to make organic gardening easier.
- [ ] Support pea plants with twiggy sticks.
- [ ] Thin carrot seedlings to ensure they have enough space to grow.
- [ ] Mulch fruit trees with a good, organic mulch.
- [ ] Protect fruit blossoms if a late frost threatens.
- [ ] Hand pollinate peaches and nectarines to get a good crop this year.
- [ ] Sow and plant 'guilds' of companion plants for new fruit trees.
- [ ] Lift and divide perennial plants this month to increase their vigour and add to plant stock.
- [ ] Clean out your greenhouse or polytunnel if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Install water butts, if you have not already, to make the most of the April showers.
- [ ] Make sure bird feeders are topped up to encourage birds into your garden.
- [ ] Keep on top of the weeding as the weather warms up. Apply mulches to cut down on weeding.
- [ ] Check for and keep on top of slugs and other pests.
- [ ] Prick out seedlings and pot up or plant out when they get their first true leaves.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section.

What Could Be Growing?

- Peas
- Broad Beans
- First Early Potatoes
- Tomatoes (seedlings, with protection or indoors)
- Peppers (seedlings, with protection or indoors)
- Aubergines (seedlings, with protection or indoors)
- Raspberries of other soft fruits
- Everything on the sowing and harvesting lists.

What Can I Harvest?

- Spring Cabbage/ Kale
- Cauliflower
- Sprouting Broccoli
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Broad Beans (Overwintered broad beans may be ready from the end of the month)
- Early Peas (Overwintered peas may be ready from the end of the month)

What Can I Sow?

- Cabbage/Kale
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Calabrese (Broccoli)
- Brussels sprouts
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Fennel
- Chard
- Spinach
- Parsnips
- Lettuce
- Leeks
- Spring Onions
- Rocket
- Radishes
- Onions (plant sets in growing areas)
- Courgettes
- Summer squash
- Cucumbers
- French Beans
- Melon
- Watermelon



May

Before May, tending plants in a polytunnel is about making sure that they make it through. From May, it is about making sure the plants do not take over! Summer may not have officially arrived, but the temperatures in a polytunnel can soar this month, so take special care to make sure ventilation and watering are taken care of. Keep on top of weeds to make sure things don't get out of control.

Make sure that you do not succumb to the temptation to cram too much into your polytunnel this month, though do make sure that you make the most of the space available to you. Enjoy the bounty that your brimming polytunnel can provide – but though this is a busy month, don't forget to look ahead to the gardening months to come.

Jobs for May in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Keep on top of ventilation and watering as the weather warms.
- [ ] Earth up your potatoes or bank up with a thick mulch.
- [ ] Plant out brassicas into their final growing positions.
- [ ] Thin out direct sown lettuce, spinach etc. and continue to water well.
- [ ] Weed around onions and garlic carefully to make sure they do not have competition.
- [ ] Surround strawberry plants with straw to protect the fruits as these begin to form.
- [ ] Closely inspect plants for pests and diseases to nip any problems in the bud.
- [ ] Continue pricking out and potting on seedlings throughout the month.
- [ ] Sow cucurbits or transfer cucurbits sown indoors into your greenhouse or polytunnel.
- [ ] Towards the end of the month, consider placing tomato plants grown indoors into a polytunnel or outdoors into a sheltered spot, after all risk of frost is gone.
- [ ] Prick out seedlings and pot up or plant out when they get their first true leaves.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.



What Could Be Growing?

- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Aubergines
- First early potatoes
- Brussels sprouts
- Calabrese
- Leeks
- Raspberries or other soft fruits
- Everything on the sowing and harvesting lists.

What Can I Harvest?

- Spring Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Sprouting Broccoli
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Fennel
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Broad Beans
- Early Peas

What Can I Sow?

- Cabbage/Kale
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Calabrese (Broccoli)
- Brussels sprouts
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Chard
- Spinach
- Parsnips
- Lettuce
- Leeks
- Spring Onions
- Rocket
- Radishes
- Onions (plant sets in growing areas)
- Courgettes
- Summer squash
- Winter squash and pumpkins
- Cucumbers
- French Beans
- Melon
- Watermelon
- Sweetcorn

June

June is the peak of the polytunnel year, when the polytunnel is crammed full and everywhere you turn you will see delicious things to harvest and eat. In June, your polytunnel can easily become too hot, so make sure you have adequate ventilation and be sure to water well, every day. Make sure you spend plenty of time in your polytunnel to tend and to harvest, and to look out for pests/disease and get on top of problems quickly when they occur.

June can be an exciting time in the polytunnel. But as well as enjoying the fruits of your labours, be sure to spend some time looking ahead and preparing for the months to come. It may seem strange to be mentioning winter at midsummer, but it is not too early to think about preparing and sowing crops for the winter and to make sure that you are prepared for the 'hungry gap' next year.

Jobs for June in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Keep on top of weeding, watering and ventilation.
- [ ] Pinch out side shoots from tomato plants and feed with a potash rich, organic fertiliser when the first trusses begin to form fruits.
- [ ] Plant out tender crops such as sweetcorn and squash etc. now the weather has warmed up more reliably.
- [ ] Peg down strawberry runners to create new plants.
- [ ] Top dress patio dwarf fruit trees with a good compost or organic mulch.
- [ ] Consider pruning plum and cherry trees now, thinning out congested branches.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.



What Can I Harvest?

- Spring Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Sprouting Broccoli
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Fennel
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Broad Beans
- Early Peas
- French Beans
- Courgettes
- Summer Squash
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries
- First early potatoes (towards the end of the month)

What Could Be Growing?

- Peppers
- Aubergines
- Sweetcorn
- Winter squash and pumpkins
- Brussels sprouts
- Calabrese
- Leeks
- Raspberries or other soft fruits
- Everything on the sowing and harvesting lists.

What Can I Sow?

- Cabbages
- Carrot
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Peas
- Lettuce and other salad leaves
- Rocket
- Radishes
- Spring onions
- Christmas potatoes (from towards the end of the month)

July

In July your polytunnel will be full and things will be progressing quickly. There will still be plenty of enticing produce to pick, and you will be eating a variety of fresh, delicious home-grown food. While outside, the UK summer can often be a bit of a disappointment, inside your polytunnel the crops will remain unfazed by the weather outdoors – as long as you continue to take care of the watering, weeding and ventilation.

Jobs for July in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Stay on top of pest control, weeding, watering and ventilation.
- [ ] Damp down your polytunnel on warm days to increase humidity and lower the temperature.
- [ ] Tidy up the debris of fallen flowers and foliage to reduce the risk of fungal disease.
- [ ] Harvest your garlic & onions when the tops start to yellow and flop over.
- [ ] Nip off the growing tips of courgettes and squash to encourage plants to bush out.
- [ ] Continue to fertilise and pinch off side shoots on tomato plants.
- [ ] Train cucumber vines to grow vertically.
- [ ] Prune the fruited stems of blackcurrant bushes when fruits have been harvested.
- [ ] Fertilise citrus trees with a specialised organic citrus fertiliser.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the ‘what can I sow’ section below.

What Could Be Growing?

- Christmas potatoes
- Melons
- Watermelons
- Winter squash and pumpkins
- Brussels sprouts
- Calabrese
- Leeks
- Everything on the harvesting and sowing lists.

What Can I Sow?

- Beetroot
- Cabbage
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Carrots
- Lettuce & other salad leaves
- Rocket
- Spring onion
- Radishes
- Turnips



What Can I Harvest?

- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Fennel
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Broad Beans
- Early Peas
- French Beans
- Courgettes
- Summer Squash
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries
- First early potatoes
- Aubergines
- Sweetcorn
- Peppers
- Raspberries & other soft fruits

August

In August, summer is still in full flow and the polytunnel is still full of a wide range of delicious things to eat. But it is important that even during your summer holidays, you make sure that your polytunnel ventilation and irrigation are taken care of. If you are going away, make sure you have systems in place to make sure your polytunnel is well taken care of while you are away. When you are there, check your polytunnel regularly to make sure that everything is going well and you can quickly nip any problems in the bud.

August is a time when all your hard work will be bearing plenty of fruit. But don't get complacent. Continue to plan ahead and make sure you keep sowing so you will still be well fed during the winter and the hungry gap next year. This is not the time to rest on your laurels. Keep working hard to make sure your polytunnel continues to produce well for you throughout the rest of this year and into next year too.

Jobs for August in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Keep on top of pest control, weeding, watering and ventilation.
- [ ] Damp down the polytunnel on hot days.
- [ ] Consider installing automatic irrigation for while you are away on holiday, and perhaps ask a friend or neighbour to nip in to check on things while you travel.
- [ ] Feed peppers, cucumbers and aubergines with a high-potassium organic feed.
- [ ] Pinch out growing tips of tomatoes if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Freeze or preserve gluts of fruit or vegetables for later use.
- [ ] Order perennial plants for autumn delivery.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.

What Can I Harvest?

- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Kohlrabi
- Calabrese
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Fennel
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Maincrop Onions
- Peas
- French Beans
- Courgettes
- Summer Squash
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries
- First early potatoes
- Aubergines
- Sweetcorn
- Peppers
- Melons
- Watermelons

What Could Be Growing?

- Christmas potatoes
- Brussels sprouts
- Leeks
- Raspberries & other soft fruits
- Everything on the harvesting and sowing lists.

What Can I Sow?

- Beetroot
- Cabbage
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Carrots
- Lettuce & other salad leaves
- Rocket
- Spring onion
- Radishes
- Turnips



September

September marks the end of the summer and the beginning of autumn, but in the polytunnel, summer crops can often still be producing well. In fact, the biggest challenge for the polytunnel gardener this month lies in determining how to manage the seasonal transition and deciding when to remove summer crops to make way for ones that will feed you over the winter and into the 'hungry gap' next year.

Though it is now too late really to sow leafy crops to overwinter in the polytunnel, there are still plenty of crops that you can sow to feed you during the 'hungry gap' next spring. As the weather begins to cool, you'll be less worried about watering and ventilation in your polytunnel, but there is still plenty to be getting on with this month.

Jobs for September in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Water early in the day to prevent problems caused by cool, damp nights.
- [ ] Clear and clean as space opens up in your polytunnel after main summer crops have been harvested.
- [ ] Make sure your rainwater harvesting system is all in good repair.
- [ ] Dry maincrop onions you have harvested in your polytunnel.
- [ ] Remove any leaves shadowing pumpkins and squash to help them to ripen up.
- [ ] Continue to harvest French and runner beans little and often to delay their maturation.
- [ ] Take hardwood cuttings to increase your stock of currants, gooseberries and figs.
- [ ] Pot up strawberry runners for next year if you have not already done so.
- [ ] Cut back the canes of summer fruiting raspberries and tie in next year's canes.
- [ ] Order bare root canes, fruit trees and soft fruit bushes for autumn planting.
- [ ] Remove and wash any pots or containers that you are not currently using.
- [ ] Consider sowing green manures to protect soil and keep down weeds over winter.
- [ ] Gather falling leaves this month and next to make leaf mould or to add to compost.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.

What Could Be Growing?

- Christmas potatoes
- Winter squash and pumpkins
- Brussels sprouts
- Leeks
- Raspberries and other soft fruits
- Everything on the harvesting and sowing lists.



What Can I Harvest?

- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Kohlrabi
- Calabrese
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Fennel
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Maincrop Onions
- Broad Beans
- Peas
- French Beans
- Courgettes
- Summer Squash
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Aubergines
- Sweetcorn
- Peppers
- Melons
- Watermelons

What Can I Sow?

- Cabbage
- Sprouting broccoli
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Carrots
- Lettuce & other salad leaves
- Rocket
- Spring onion
- Radishes
- Turnips
- Peas

October

In October, the polytunnel can still look great. As the nights begin to draw in and the trees outside lose their leaves in autumnal storms, inside the polytunnel, there should still be plenty to harvest. But while you should take some time to revel in a job well done, it is also important to make sure you are ready for the winter and 'hungry gap' to come. October is your last chance to plan for winter and spring crops, so make sure you have done so as soon as possible.

Before the colder weather arrives and the first frost is experienced in your area, make sure you have a plan in place to either heat or provide a little extra protection to your plants over the winter months. Check over your polytunnel for any unwanted guests, and have a good tidy up as you clear the last of the summer crops away.

Jobs for October in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Check for pests and reduce watering, but continue to ensure adequate ventilation.
- [ ] Clean and do any necessary repairs to the outside of your polytunnel before winter arrives.
- [ ] Bring tender plants in under cover before frost threatens.
- [ ] Rake all garden leaves to use on compost, as mulch or to make leaf mould.
- [ ] Check stored potatoes and other vegetables to make sure they are safe and sound.
- [ ] Plan and order any tree, shrub or perennial plants you want to put into your polytunnel before spring.
- [ ] Rake fallen leaves to make leaf mould or add to compost.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the 'what can I sow' section below.

What Can I Harvest?

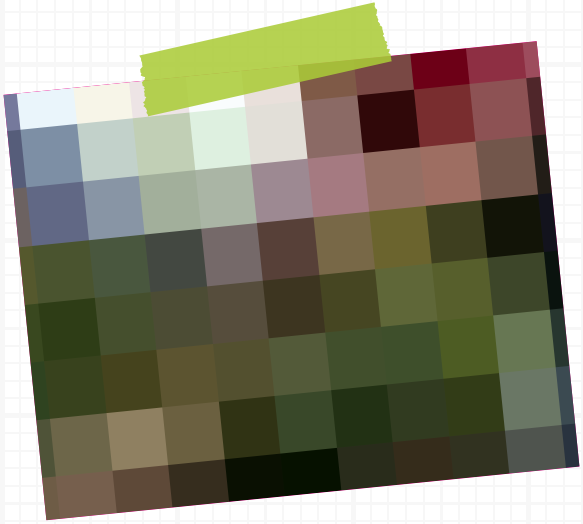
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Spring onions
- Maincrop Onions
- Broad Beans
- Peas
- French Beans
- Winter squash and pumpkins
- Courgettes (Remove by the end of the month)
- Cucumbers (Remove by the end of the month)
- Tomatoes (Remove by the end of the month)
- Aubergines (Remove by the end of the month)

What Could Be Growing?

- Christmas potatoes
- Brussels sprouts
- Leeks
- Raspberries and other soft fruits
- Everything on the sowing and harvesting lists.

What Can I Sow?

- Cabbage
- Cauliflowers
- Kohlrabi
- Broad beans
- Peas
- Radishes
- Spring onions
- Winter lettuce & other salad leaves



November

November is a more relaxing period in the gardening year, when plants enter their dormant phase and growth slows considerably or stops entirely. But while you can pat yourself on the back for all the amazing produce you have grown throughout the year, it is still important not to become complacent and there are still plenty of things you can do in your polytunnel this month.

If you have not already done so, not is the time to break out the extra protection for polytunnel plants. Protect overwintering plants with an extra layer – fleece, fabric, bubblewrap or mini polytunnels or cloches can all do the trick. This may also be the time to start heating your polytunnel, if you have decided to do so.

Jobs for November in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Create a perennial vegetable bed for rhubarb, asparagus and other perennial food crops.
- [ ] Stake any top-heavy brassicas such as Brussels sprouts to prevent damage.
- [ ] Consider building new raised beds or creating new growing areas in your polytunnel that can be planted up in the spring.
- [ ] Consider planting bare root canes, fruit trees and fruit bushes in your polytunnel between now and February.
- [ ] Check over any fruits/vegetables in storage to ensure none are rotting and spoiling the whole lot.
- [ ] Consider installing solar lighting so you can still get out there and check on plants on dark winter nights.
- [ ] Repair any damage to structures before the worst of the winter weather arrives.
- [ ] Take care not to overwater plants.
- [ ] Continue to clear and gather fallen leaves for use around the garden.
- [ ] Make leaf mould if you have not begun to do so already.
- [ ] Make a new compost heap.
- [ ] Insulate outdoors taps and outdoors piping to prevent them from freezing over the winter.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed to the right).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the ‘what can I sow’ section below.

What Could Be Growing?

- Christmas potatoes
- Brussels sprouts
- Raspberries and other soft fruits
- Everything on the harvesting and sowing lists.

What Can I Harvest?

- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Kohlrabi
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Chard
- Spinach
- Rocket
- Turnips
- Lettuce & other salad greens
- Leeks
- Spring onions
- Winter squash and pumpkins
- Christmas potatoes

What Can I Sow?

- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Garlic
- Broad Beans
- Winter lettuce





December

Jobs for December in a Polytunnel:

- [ ] Make sure plants are protected and pay attention to the weather forecast.
- [ ] Remove yellow leaves from brassicas as these can harbour disease and cause problems.
- [ ] Continue to plant bare root canes, trees and berry bushes throughout the dormant season.
- [ ] Consider planting grape vines in your polytunnel this month.
- [ ] Deal with any snow that falls on your polytunnel. Snow will act as insulation, but leave it too long and it can block out too much light, when light is most needed. A severe and heavy accumulation could even potentially damage the structure. (Remove snow by gently pushing from inside, or, on larger tunnels, remove from outside with a long handled brush and/or a rope held between two people and gently dragged over the top of the structure.)
- [ ] Keep checking for pests on overwintering plants in your polytunnel.
- [ ] Check on paths, staging etc. and make any adjustments or repairs that may be needed.
- [ ] Clean and oil garden tools and make sure they are stored properly and safely.
- [ ] Continue to tend and harvest crops (listed below).
- [ ] Sow or plant items mentioned in the ‘what can I sow’ section below.