

Harvesting (Stage 6)

Earlies - 65-100 days

Second Earlies - 100-130 days

Maincrop - 125-180 days

These are guidelines dependent on planting date and growing conditions

Before harvesting, carefully scrape away some soil and check that the potatoes have grown to the size that you like.

First Earlies are best enjoyed when they are small and fresh in June/July/August and Second Earlies follow on. Maincrop varieties are best left until October for size and skin set. Once the Maincrop foliage has died back the potatoes should be left in the ground for 2-3 weeks to allow the skins to set, ready for storing.

Planting and Harvesting Guidelines

Maturity	Plant	Depth	Distance	With Between Rows	Harvest
First Earlies	March - April	10cm (4in)	30cm (12in)	45cm (18in)	June - August
Second Earlies	April - May	10cm (4in)	30cm (12in)	45cm (18in)	July - September
Maincrop	April - May	10cm (4in)	37.5cm (15in)	67.5cm (27in)	September - October
Salads	March - April	10cm (4in)	30cm (12in)	45cm (18in)	July - September

Storing

Dry the tubers by laying them on the soil for a few hours once you've dug them up. Some varieties (generally Maincrop) are good keepers and will remain dormant and not start sprouting until April.

The storage conditions should be cool, frost free, airy and away from light as this can cause greening. Hessian sacks allow for excellent air circulation, paper sacks are good but avoid plastic.

Blight

Join the "Fight Against Blight"; a Potato Council campaign to help gardeners avoid the disappointment of blight. Get the latest information and great tips from www.potato.org.uk/blight.

Growing Tips

Why not have a look on www.wcf-phoenix.co.uk for loads of great information on Varieties, Growing and Harvesting Tips.

GROWING IN CONTAINERS

A container 45cm (18in) deep and 40cm (16in) in diameter holds 2 seed potatoes.

Planting

Fill the base with 10cm (4in) of compost mixed with perlite to aid drainage. Add the seed potatoes and cover with 10cm (4in) of compost. As the plant grows, keep adding compost. The plant will grow through the compost and continue to form potatoes. When the plant reaches the top of the container, allow it to grow normally. Harvest when the potatoes have reached the desired size (check by feeling through the compost). Water well but take care not to overwater.