

Grow your own fruit trees and berries

Top tips by celebrity plantsman Chris Collins



Planting fruit trees and berries can be easy when you know how, so PlantforLife has teamed up with celebrity plantsman, Chris Collins to provide a simple step-by-step guide for growing them in containers or in a small space in the garden.

Fruit trees



1

Prepare your fruit tree by soaking the roots before planting

2

Find a sunny but sheltered spot to plant your tree as this will maximise the time your fruit has to ripen

3

Dig a hole about a third wider than the tree roots and to the same depth as the roots. Place the tree into the hole and make sure the soil is firm around the tree. Once planted, top the base up with well rotted organic matter

4

If you are growing your tree in a container, fill half of it with soil-based potting compost and place your tree on top. When happy with its position, fill around the sides making sure the plant is firmly in place

5

Prune your fruit tree in late winter or early spring to encourage further flowering and fruiting



Berry shrubs



1

Choose the ideal location in your garden to plant your berry shrub. Blackberries and raspberries prefer a sunnier site whilst blueberries, strawberries and cranberries can grow in partial shade

2

Dig a hole into the soil and make sure it is well-drained and full of rich, organic matter such as compost or manure. Some shrubs will require a support system to grow, such as a sturdy fence or trellis

3

Plant your berries into the ground, once planted feed with a mulch and water well. To encourage growth cut the stems by approximately 10 inches

4

Prune the berry shrubs each year after fruiting to ensure regular crops of berries in the years to follow

5

Pick your berries as they ripen and cover with netting to protect them from insects and birds



Top maintenance tips

If you are planting fruit trees in the ground, ensure the soil has good drainage so the trees don't get waterlogged

Fruit trees and berry shrubs need different soil to grow, so ask your local garden centre for the best variety for the fruit you are planting

Prepare your soil well in advance of purchasing your fruit trees and berries

For a small garden, consider dwarf trees such as apples, cherries and plums

Allow fruit to ripen on the tree or shrub and gently squeeze it before picking to check that it's ready to eat

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