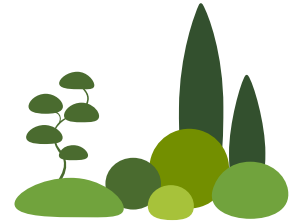


Observing your space helps make decisions about the design of your garden, ensuring everything is in a spot where it can thrive.



1. Key Ideas

We want to find out:

- How your garden is currently used and by whom?
- How much space there is for growing food just now?
- What might be the best location for a (new) food garden?



2. Use and Purpose

First, think about what you want to get out of your garden:

- What do you want to do in the garden?
- What elements does it need?
- What do you like to grow besides food?

Make a list of things that you want to keep. Is there anything you don't want to keep, but that can be used elsewhere in the garden?

3. Survey

Start with a drawing of the space, and mark where south is. Add any existing features you want to keep and where they are (these might include sheds, trees, car park, patios).

Consider some basic questions:

- What is the soil like in different areas of the garden? Is there grass, tarmac, poor soil, raised beds? Is the soil moist or dry?
- Are there plants you want moved?
- Are there any materials you want to (re)-use?
- Where do you access the garden?
- Are there any security issues?



Sit down at 3 different times during the day (morning, mid-day and evening) and have a look at how things change. Make notes, or take pictures, to remind yourself. Consider:

- Which areas are sunny, and which are shady?
- Is it windy or sheltered?
- What animals visit the garden?

4. Clear the Grounds

Look closely at a potential growing space:

- What's on the ground? Weeds, rubbish, or stones may be used elsewhere in the garden.
- What do you need to discard?

6. Mapping and Measuring

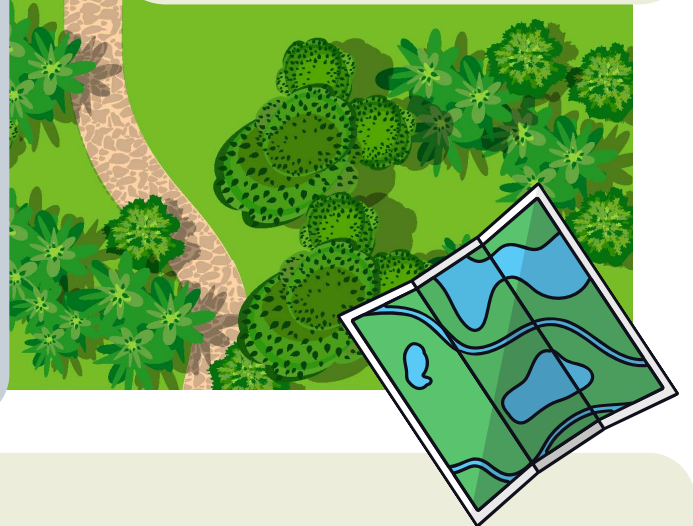
Food grows best in full sun, in shelter, and away from trees. It's important to find out where a food garden may be located and if there's enough space for it there.

Think about water taps, walkways (measure these), and compost bins. Is there a better place for these, or a closer place for the food garden? Measure all other elements that you will keep and mark them on your map.

5. Harvesting and Preserving

If the garden has lots of plants in it already:

- Harvest any remaining produce
- Dig up plants that need moved - veggies, berries or flowers can be used for various purposes. Keep dug up plants moist by watering daily until they're re-planted.



7. Design Your Garden

Draw the map of your garden again, include everything you want to keep and start adding new elements such as the food garden, pathways, and compost bins.

You might want an area with perennials - such as fruit trees and shrubs - that stay in the same spot year after year. You might also want an area for annuals (that you sow and harvest yearly).

Go back to the list you made earlier in **Use and Purpose** to check everything has a space. For every element, keep checking that the spot you chose is the best, based on your survey of the garden.

Remember, there's no right or wrong in garden design, if everything is in a spot where it can thrive. Possibilities are endless, so have fun!