

# Square Foot Gardening Supply List

## Construction Supplies for building and filling (1) 4'x4' box:

- ✚ 4 four-foot 2" x 6" boards (8'/cut in half) (**not chemically treated**)
- ✚ Coarse threaded deck screws, #9x3.5" or #9x3"
- ✚ 6 four-foot wood lath strips or plastic cording to divide box into 16 squares
- ✚ Machine screws (if using lath stripping for grid), machine screw nuts
- ✚ Heavy duty stapler (if using plastic cording for grid)
- ✚ Wood screws, 9x3.5" coated (if using lath stripping for grid)
- ✚ 8' of Weed barrier cloth, 4' wide
- ✚ Scissors
- ✚ Large plastic tarp, 16' x 16'
- ✚ Cordless power drill
- ✚ Hose and spray nozzle, set at "fine" spray!
- ✚ Painters masks to use while mixing growing medium
- ✚ Gloves

## Mix Ingredients for Growing Medium: "Mel's Mix" for (1) 4'x4' box: (Need total of 8 cubic feet of mix)

- 1/3 **coarse** vermiculite, 1/3 peat moss, 1/3 five kinds of compost  
(2.6 cu ft) (2.6 cu ft) (2.6 cu ft)
- ✚ Coarse vermiculite: 2.6 cu ft (buy the 4 cu ft bag—much less expensive!)
  - ✚ Peat Moss: 6 bales of 2.2 cu ft compressed (doubles when opened)
  - ✚ 5 kinds of compost: 2.6 total cu ft total, 1/2 cu ft of
    - Wood: 1.0 cu ft
    - Mixed: .5 cu ft
    - Mushroom: .5 cu ft
    - Cow manure: .5 cu ft (1/3 of 1.5 cu ft bag)
    - Worm castings: (sprinkle small amount and mix in around plants)

## Vertical Frame

- ✚ Nylon Tomato Netting, 4-feet wide
- ✚ Rebar, 2 pieces, 1/2" diameter, 18-24" long
- ✚ 2 six-foot electrical conduit, 1/2" diameter
- ✚ 1 four-foot electrical conduit, 1/2" diameter
- ✚ 2 elbow connectors
- ✚ Small plastic ties (just a few!)

## Full Cover – for a 4'x4' box

Materials for one cage:

- ✚ 4 four-foot 1" x 2" boards
- ✚ Chicken wire – 1" openings
- ✚ Plastic ties
- ✚ Cordless Power Drill
- ✚ Coarse threaded deck screws, 7x1 1/4" coated
- ✚ Stapler, 3/8" staples
- ✚ Wire-cutting shears and thick gloves

## Plants

In Illinois, you can grow cool season crops in the Spring, warm season crops in the Summer and another season of cool crops in the Fall!

**Cost** - First year: Approximately \$60 for construction/plants  
Following years: Cost of plants and one, small bag of compost to freshen the box up.

### Local Resources for “Mel’s Mix”

Wood Compost: EZ Tree Recycling, 7050 S. Dorchester, Chicago/ 773-493-8600  
(Weed-free) (Sold in bags that hold 1-2 cu ft) You shovel it yourself. Cost per bag: \$1.50. (Cash only)

Mixed Compost: The Resource Center, 1325 E. 70<sup>th</sup> St., Chicago/ 773-493-1470  
(Bring your own container –kitty litter plastic containers work great!  
You shovel it yourself. Approximate cost per kitty litter container:  
\$1.25. (Cash only)

Cow manure/  
humus: Most garden centers/ Home Depot Garden Dept. Sold in 1.5 cu ft bags

Mushroom  
Compost: Lake Street Supply Co, 1810 W Lake Street, Chicago/312-226-0760  
2 cu ft bag \$4 and at most garden centers/ Home Depot Garden Dept

Worm castings: Brew and Grow, 1824 N Besley Ct (Cortland & Ashland),  
Chicago/773-395-1500 (30 lb worm casting/\$20)

Coarse  
vermiculite: Carlin Horticultural Supplies, 3470 Mound Rd, Joliet/ 815-723-4077  
4 cu ft bag \$11 (Call for delivery options)

Peat moss: Sid’s, 10926 Southwest Highway, Palos Hills/ 708-974-4500

Graff Gardens, 7254 Southwest Hwy, Worth/ 708-361-7805

Home Depot Garden Dept

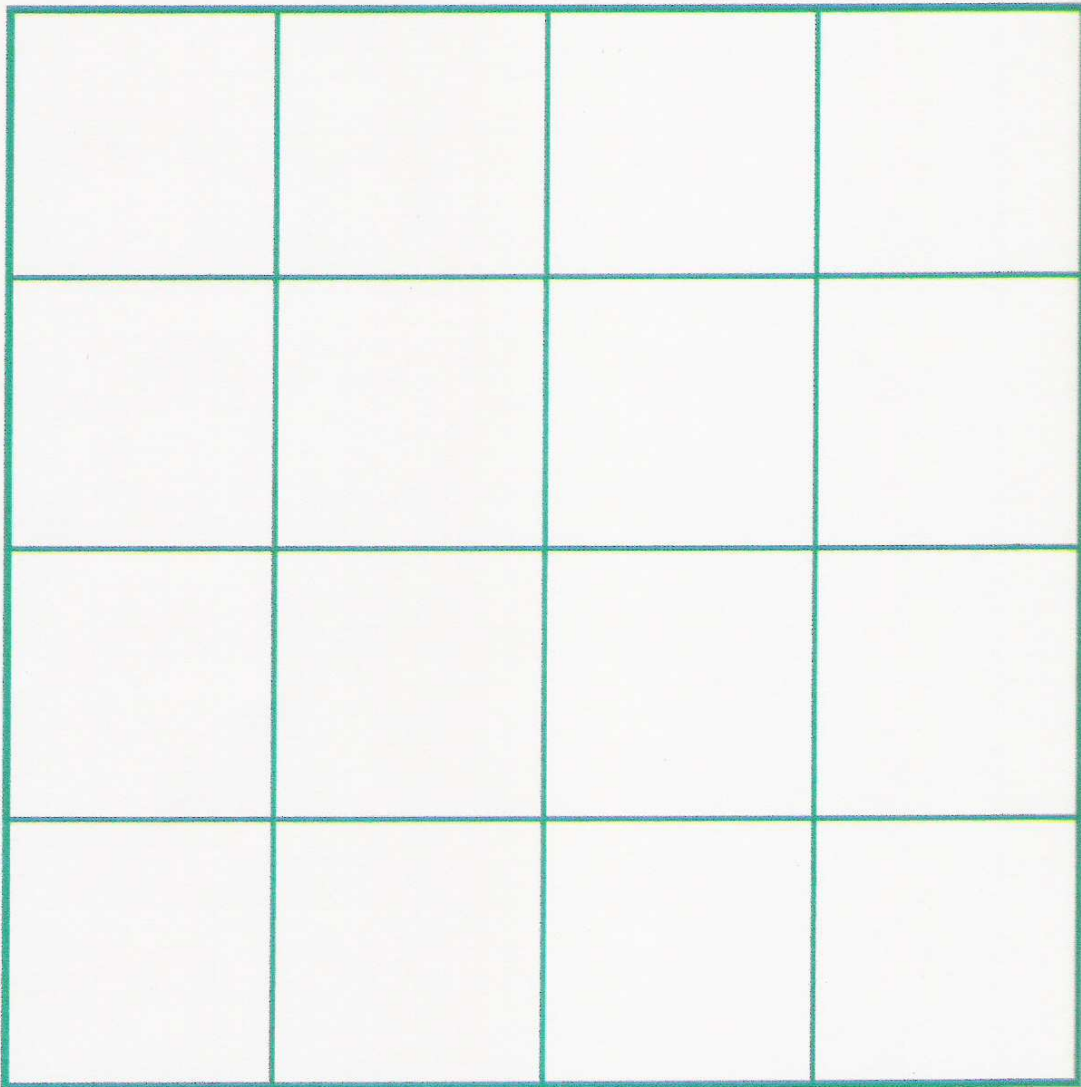
(Be sure you buy the compressed bales. If you’re building several boxes, get the 3.9 compressed bale. It will expand to 8 cu ft of peat moss when opened.)

### Resources to learn more about Square Foot Gardening

Book: Mel Bartholomew, **All New Square Foot Gardening: Grow More in Less Space**, Cool Springs Press, 2005.

Website: [www.squarefootgardening.com](http://www.squarefootgardening.com)

# Planning Grids



A 4x4 grid for planning, consisting of 16 empty cells. The grid is outlined in green. Above the grid is a yellow header with the text "Planning Grids" in red. Below the header is a yellow strip with a perforated edge, suggesting the grid is designed to be torn out of a notebook.


## PLANT SPACING

### Extra Large

1 Plant

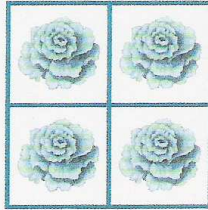
Placed 12 inches apart:  
Broccoli



### Large

4 Plants

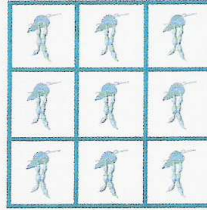
Placed 6 inches apart:  
Leaf Lettuce



### Medium

9 Plants

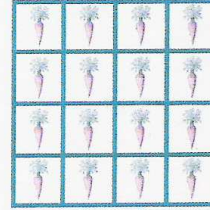
Placed 4 inches apart:  
Bush Bean



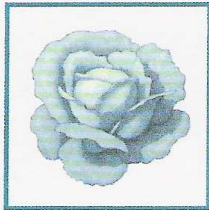
### Small

16 Plants

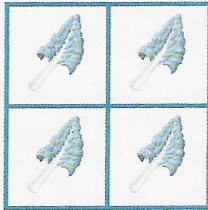
Placed 3 inches apart:  
Carrot



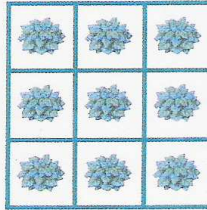
### Cabbage



### Swiss Chard



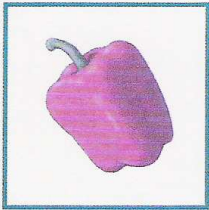
### Spinach



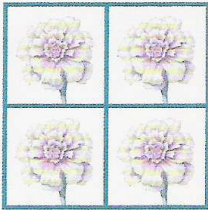
### Radish



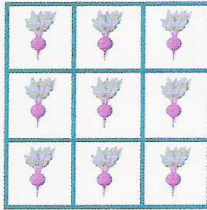
### Pepper



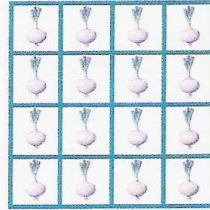
### Marigold



### Beet



### Onion



To help keep up with this, you may want to copy this chart so you always have it handy. Some people even have it laminated so they can take it outdoors without worrying about the weather destroying it.

Another way to get the proper spacing and number per square foot is to be a little more scientific and do a little arithmetic as shown below.

You can see that one, four, nine, or sixteen plants should be spaced an equivalent number of inches apart. This is the same distance the seed packet will say "thin to." Of course we don't have to "thin to" because we don't plant a whole packet of seeds anymore. So if you're planting seeds, or even putting in transplants that you purchased or grew from seed, just find the seed packet or planting directions to see what the distance is for thinning.