

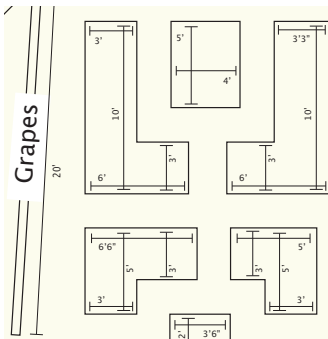


How-To: CALCULATING SEED AMOUNTS

Choosing seed varieties can take some time and effort, and once you've gotten that part figured out, how do you determine the number of seeds you need? Setting aside a little time to calculate how many seeds you'll use can help you order appropriate amounts of seed and save money.



SEEDS COME IN VASTLY DIFFERENT SIZES AND SHAPES, SO DETERMINING THE WEIGHT YOU'LL NEED FOR EACH CROP TAKES SOME CALCULATING



CREATING A TO-SCALE MAP OF YOUR GARDEN IS THE FIRST STEP IN CALCULATING SEED AMOUNTS

**1 GRAM =
.035 OUNCES**

**1 OUNCE =
28.4 GRAMS**

MAP THE CROPS IN YOUR GARDEN SPACE

1. Use graph paper to draw your garden to scale.
2. Determine what different crops you'd like to grow and about how much room you have for each crop.
3. Look in a seed catalog to see what spacing is recommended for each type of seeds. For some crops you will find two numbers: one for spacing between the seeds or plants and one for spacing between the rows. If there is only one number, use it for spacing both the plants and the rows. For example, pea seeds should be spaced 1 in. apart, in rows 2 ft apart. Tomatoes have a spacing of 24-36 in. apart, and that number is used for both within and between rows.
4. Based on the number for spacing between rows, determine how many rows you can fit within the space you have allotted for each crop. For some larger crops, you may only be able to fit one row within the space.

CALCULATE THE NUMBER OF SEEDS OR PLANTS

1. Add up the total number of row feet you have available for the crop. For example, if you have two, 5 foot rows available for peas, there are 10 total row feet to fill. If you have one, 8 foot row for tomatoes, there are 8 total row feet.
2. At this point is usually easiest to convert the number of feet to inches, since most seed and plant recommendations are in inch spacing. For example, 10 row feet times 12 in./ft equals 120 in. for peas. 8 row feet times 12 in./ft equals 96 in. for tomatoes.
3. Take the total number of inches available for the crop and divide by the in-row crop spacing. For instance, 120 in. divided by 1 in. per pea seed equals 120 pea seeds. 96 in. divided by 24 in. per tomato plant equals 4 tomato plants.

DETERMINE HOW MANY SEEDS TO ORDER

Seeds vary in their sizes, shapes, and weights. Some small amounts of seeds are sold by the piece (for example, a packet may contain 250 seeds). However, larger numbers of seeds are often sold by weight. To determine how many seeds of a particular crop are in a measurement of weight, like ounces (oz), grams (g) or pounds (lb), look in a seed catalog for their estimate of the number of seeds in a particular weight. For instance, there are approximately 2000 pea seeds/lb. Here's how to determine the weight you need:

1. Take the number of seeds you need (120) divided by the number of seeds per weight measurement (2000/lb). This number indicates the percentage of the weight measurement that you will want to purchase. In this instance, the weight measurement is .06 lb.



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CONSIDER HOW MUCH SPACE YOU CAN DEVOTE TO EACH CROP, AND WHETHER THERE WILL BE MORE THAN ONE SUCCESSION IN THAT SPACE OVER THE GROWING SEASON

2. Determine the best amount to order by taking into account pricing, how well the seeds will last, and the probability of wanting to use the same variety in future years. It's generally best to buy as close as possible to the amount that you will use in a given year, to ensure good germination. In the case of the peas, the smallest weight amount that our catalog offers is $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. It would take 8 years to use up this amount of seed, with the amount of peas we plan to plant in our garden space, so the better decision is probably to opt for the smaller "packet" size, which includes 250 seeds – enough for two years.