

COLOUR-CODED SEED SPACERS

Rose Hughes creates a ruler and a square to perfectly space the crops in a square-metre vege garden!

MATERIALS

You will need: • 1.8m - 40mm x 10mm pine for seed ruler(s) • Ply offcut or similar - 330mm x 330mm • 9mm dowel • Tape measure / pencil • Sandpaper • Screwdriver & drill bit - 9mm • Straight edge & clamps • Paint test pots and brushes • Circle template • Letraset letters & numbers (optional) • Varnish

Cost: \$45 excluding paint



Seedling squares are used in the method of edible gardening known here as square metre gardening, but in the United States as square foot gardening. The square metre gardening method involves planting crops closer together to make better use of smaller spaces.

You can colour-code the holes on the seedling square to represent the right spacing for big, medium and small crops. For large crops like brassicas, grow one plant per square; for mid-sized crops, like lettuce, grow six in each square; and for narrow crops like radishes and carrots, grow 16 plants per square. Using this tool will also help you know if something pops up out of the grid that it is a weed and not a valuable plant!

Don't follow the square metre gardening method? Make a ruler instead to space your seeds and seedlings perfectly.

Seed ruler:

1 Cut the ruler to length. I halved the 1.8m length to make 2 rulers. Sand the edges.

2 Mark a pencil line 1.5cm in from one edge, clamp a straight edge to use as a guide. Using the 9mm drill bit, drill holes along the length, measuring the gap between the holes at 1cm. You can roll up a scrap of sandpaper to sand inside each hole.

3 Mask and paint the ruler. I used Resene Sushi. Add text and apply a coat of Resene Aquaclear varnish. Add written instructions in Letraset (optional).

Seed square:

4 Carefully mark the grid onto the ply. There should be 15 lines each way at 20.1mm apart. Mark the centre and quarter lines with a waterproof marker or pen.

5 Mark out the holes (see photo) and drill using the 9mm drill bit. Sand well, including inside each hole. Make a dibber out of a length of 9mm dowel marked at 1cm and 2cm depth, taking into account the depth of the square itself.

6 Paint & varnish. I used Resene Sushi, Japanese Laurel, Clockwork Orange and Dare Devil to mark the sets of holes. Apply a coat of Resene Aquaclear. ❀