

# Let's Plan!

## A Student's Guide to Growing the Tower Garden Flex OUTDOORS



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# A NOTE TO PARENTS

Whenever I ask someone why they want to garden, I am always surprised and humbled by their answers. They reminisce about their grandmother's beautiful garden, juicy heirloom tomatoes, a childhood spent climbing mulberry trees that stained their purple for days. They lament the cost of supermarket produce, their frustration with cucumbers rotting in the refrigerator, and vegetables past their prime before they even hit the stores. They wring their hands as they talk about their child's diagnosis (autism, learning disabilities, POTS, PANDAS, autoimmune diseases) and wonder if improving their child's nutrition could possibly help.

As our world becomes more confusing and more complicated, it's no wonder that people are drawn back to their first love: gardening. However, parents are busy, sandwiched between the needs of their children and the needs of their parents. The idea of spending hours in the garden sounds romantic, but is rarely practical. In addition, apartment and condo dwellers lack the land to grow a large, expansive garden, and no one has the energy to fight with the HOA for the right to grow their own food.

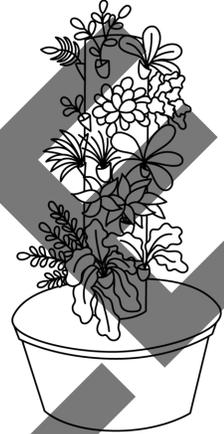


Happily, modern problems have found a modern solution! The interest in Tower Gardens has exploded over the last few years, and it's no wonder. A Tower Garden requires far less space, a fraction of the time to grow, less water, and less fertilizer than a traditional soil garden. Tower Gardens can be grown indoors, outdoors, on patios, balconies, cafes, bedrooms, offices, apartments, condos, or anywhere there's an electrical outlet. And the produce they produce? It's colorful, clean, nutrient-rich, crisp, and utterly delicious.

This book is a compilation of answers to the most common questions I have gotten as I've helped thousands of families grow Tower Gardens. Written in a child-friendly manner, it is designed to engage your children in the growing process. If I can be of service in any way, please feel free to reach out to me at [www.growlearngarden.com](http://www.growlearngarden.com).

This guide will help you explore how plants grow in a Tower Garden and understand what makes them thrive.

Each section includes short lessons, simple experiments, and journal activities to guide you through planning, planting, and caring for your tower.



You don't need to be an expert gardener—just curious and willing to observe, record, and learn as you go.

The Tower Garden has a longer growing season than soil gardens, so pay special attention to the garden calendar. These and other tweaks in this guide are designed to maximize the unique power of aeroponic growing.

## **REMEMBER...**

*Gardening is a process of discovery. Take your time, observe often, and enjoy watching your tower come to life.*



# PLANNING YOUR TOWER GARDEN

# PLANNING YOUR TOWER GARDEN

Plan ahead? Or wing it? It's up to you!

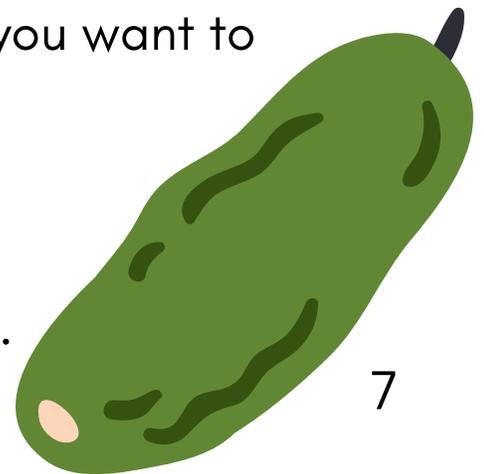
While the success of your garden depends on proper planning, sometimes the best learning experiences come when we operate with reckless abandon! Most importantly:

**HAVE  
FUN**

The planning process may seem overwhelming at first, but by breaking this task down into simple steps, you'll be surprised at how easy it can be!

Here's what you'll need to do:

1. Choose your Tower Garden.
2. Identify the planting season that you are in.
3. Pick your crops.
4. Decide on the number of each crop you want to grow.
5. Fill out the planning sheets.
6. Plant seeds.
7. Move seedlings to the Tower Garden.



## 2. IDENTIFY THE PLANTING SEASON YOU ARE IN

Which season are you planting for?

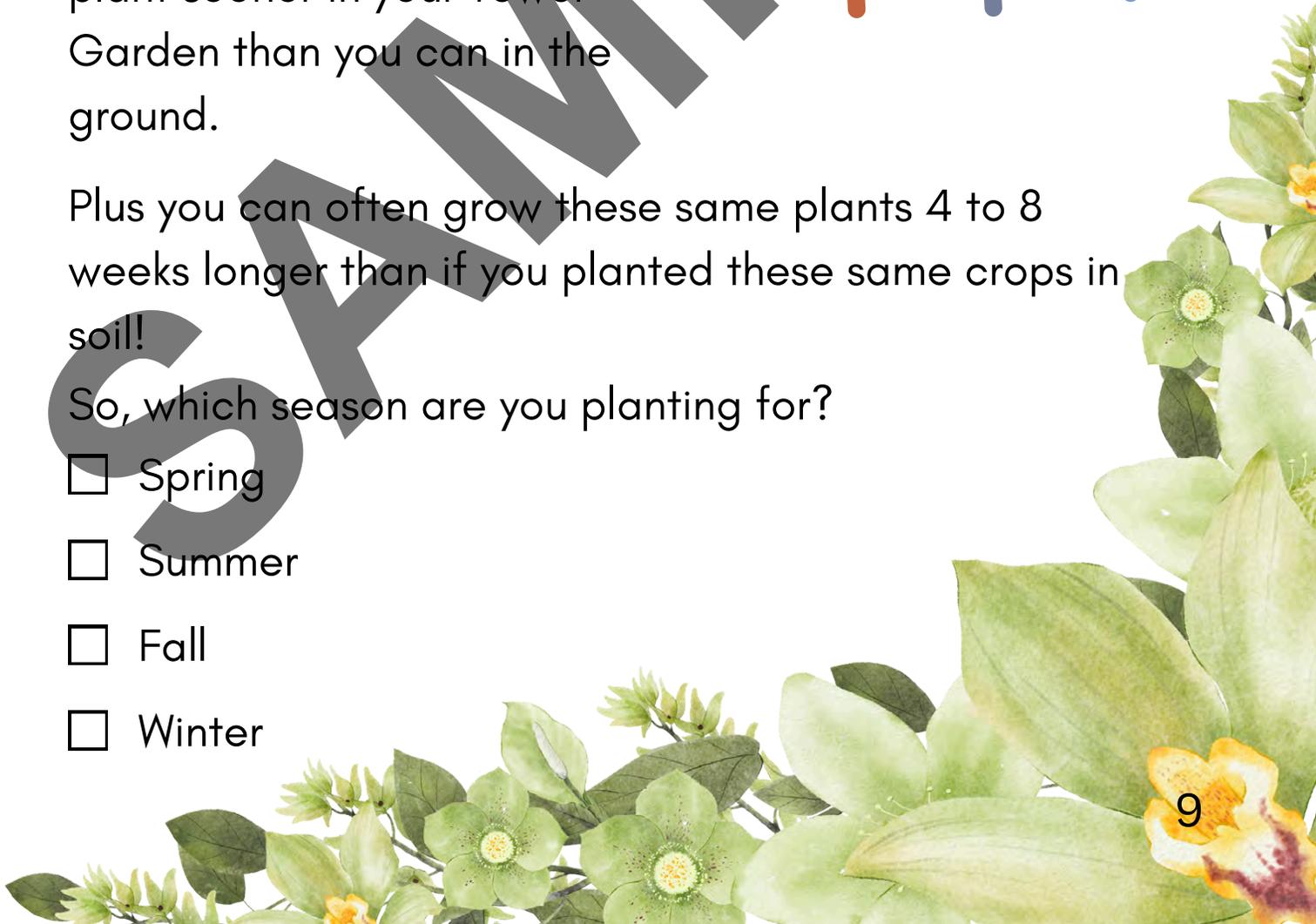
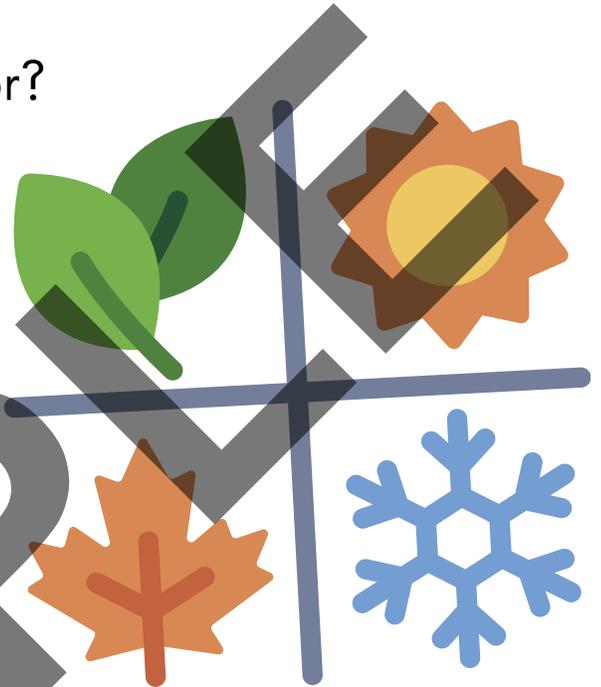
Reference the planting calendar, starting on p. 44.

Because the circulating water of your aeroponic garden cools the roots in summer, and warms them in winter, you can often plant sooner in your Tower Garden than you can in the ground.

Plus you can often grow these same plants 4 to 8 weeks longer than if you planted these same crops in soil!

So, which season are you planting for?

- Spring
- Summer
- Fall
- Winter



## MEDIUM-SIZED PLANTS

Next, you want to choose medium sized plants to grow in the middle of your Tower Garden.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Romaine Lettuce   | <input type="checkbox"/> Napa Cabbage             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf Lettuce      | <input type="checkbox"/> Kale                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bibb Lettuce      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mizuna                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sugar Snap Pea    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tatsoi                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bull's Blood Beet | <input type="checkbox"/> Swiss Chard              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turnips           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yellow Squash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bok Choy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Zucchini                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli          | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Pepper               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccolini        | <input type="checkbox"/> Bell Pepper              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower       | <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Pepper              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celery            | <input type="checkbox"/> (Bush) Green Beans       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dill              | <input type="checkbox"/> Marigold                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rosemary          | <input type="checkbox"/> Cosmos                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basil             | <input type="checkbox"/> Zinnia                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parsley           | <input type="checkbox"/> Coreopsis                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peppermint        | <input type="checkbox"/> Snapdragons              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sage              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red Cabbage       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green Cabbage     |   |



## 5. FILL OUT YOUR PLANNING SHEET

It's time to map out your tower!

Choose the planning sheet that matches the type of Tower Garden you have – Standard, Extension, Combo Extension, or Baby Extension. Print or copy that page to use for your plan.



Then, fill in each section with the plants you've chosen:

- Write the plant name in each spot (large, medium, small, or baby).
- You can draw or color each space to help visualize your tower.
- Keep this sheet handy – it will guide you when it's time to plant your seeds and transfer them into your Tower Garden.

When you're finished, you'll have a clear plan for exactly what's growing and where!



# TOWER GARDEN PLAN (WITH COMBO EXTENSION)

7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

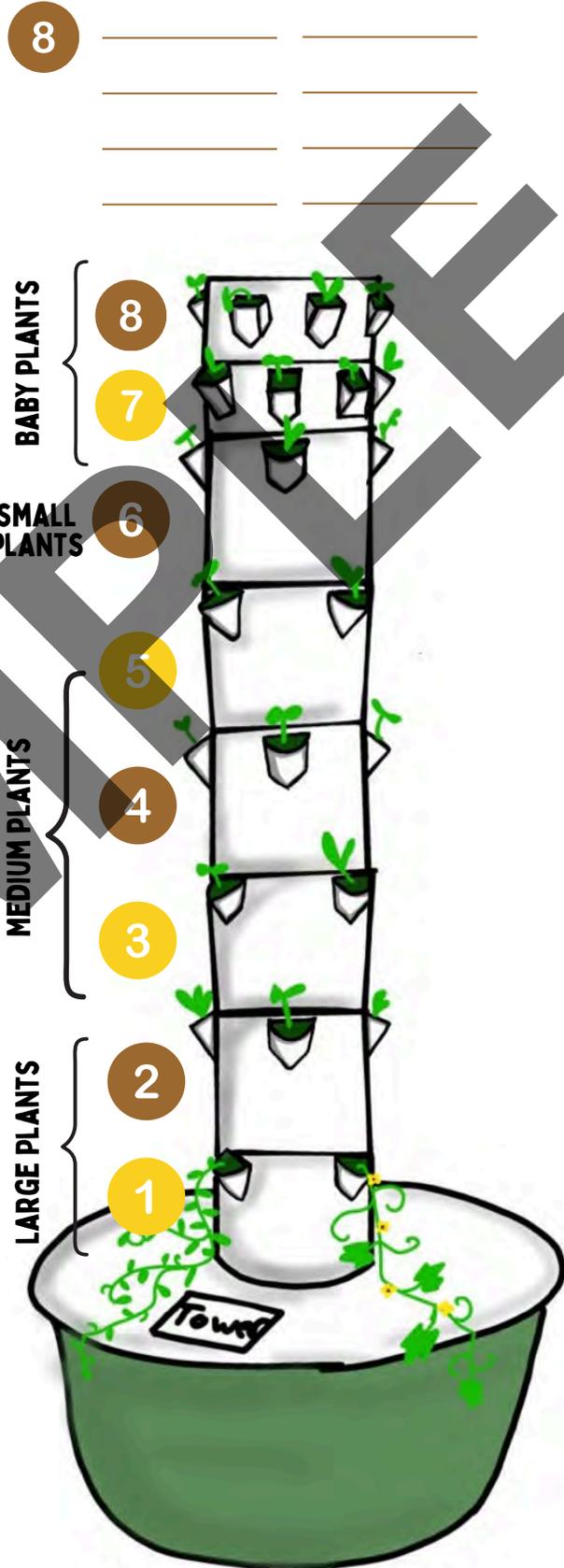
5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## 7. TRANSFER YOUR SEEDLINGS

As soon as you see green sprouts, you can move the plants to the Tower Garden!

If you choose to leave them in the growing tray for a few days, put them outside in a sunny spot or under the Germinator. They need lots of light!

You also want to feed them diluted Tower Garden tonic (5ml of each A and B in one gallon of water) once they get their second set of leaves.



# MY TOWER TODAY LOG

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Day:  Morning  Afternoon  Evening

I SEE



I SMELL



I FEEL



Today's garden sketch:

Visitors I saw:

---

---

Care check:

- Water is flowing
- Pump is on
- No leaks
- No wilted leaves

# WEEKLY GROWTH TRACKER

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Plant I'm Tracking: \_\_\_\_\_

|     | HEIGHT | # OF LEAVES | NOTES |
|-----|--------|-------------|-------|
| MON |        |             |       |
| TUE |        |             |       |
| WED |        |             |       |
| THU |        |             |       |
| FRI |        |             |       |
| SAT |        |             |       |
| SUN |        |             |       |

## WHAT I NOTICE

*My plant looks:*

Taller    Greener    Blooming    Same as before

*I noticed:*

\_\_\_\_\_

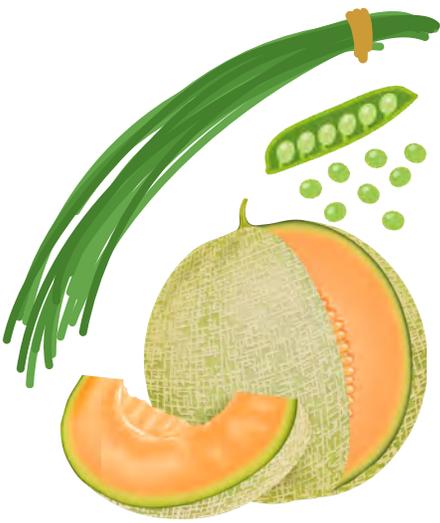
*Next week I will:*

\_\_\_\_\_



# SUMMER

Summer is Florida's tropical season. In Florida, the summer gardening season starts when the nighttime temps warm to greater than 72°F (22°C).



This is the time of year when plants like tomatoes stop making fruit and leafy greens go to seed. Instead, gardeners switch to tropical crops like Asian long beans, tropical spinaches, melons, and southern peas.

Hurricanes can make this growing season a bit tricky, but Tower Gardens can be rolled into a garage or patio for safety.



RESEARCH IT

Make a "summer crop list" with three tropical plants you'd like to try. Look them up and draw a sketch of each in your journal.



# WINTER PLANTS

*These plants make great winter companions for Tower Gardens. Check out the link below for more details on the specific types!*

## VEGGIES

- Tokyo Bekana
- Kale
- Swiss Chard
- Cabbage
- Peas
- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Broccoli
- Radish
- Celery
- Bok Choy
- Arugula
- Watercress
- Cauliflower



## HERBS

- Cilantro
- Parsley
- Thyme
- Chives
- Fennel



*Flowers attract pollinators!*

## FLOWERS

- Marigolds
- Calendula
- Viola



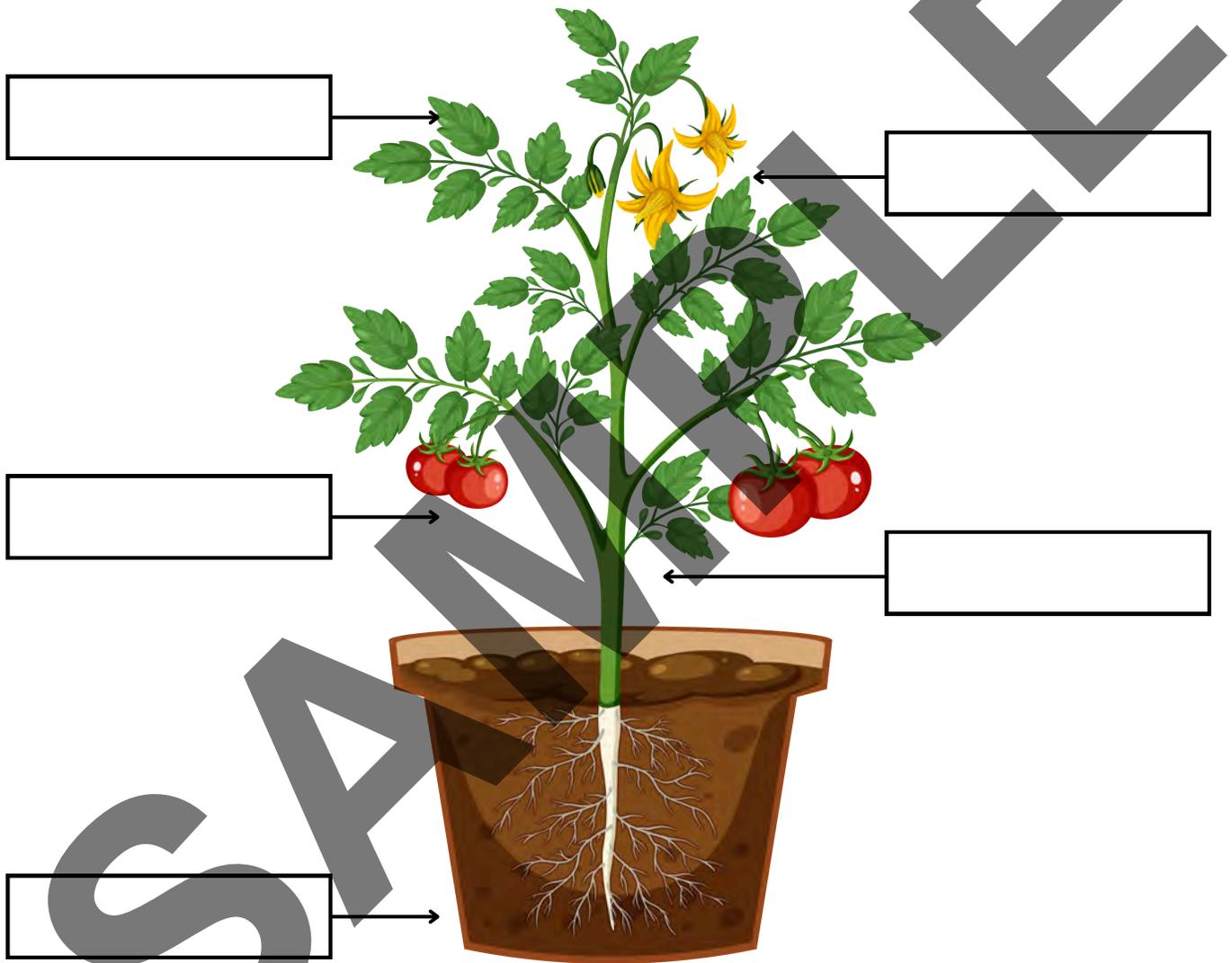
## FRUITS & BERRIES

- Strawberries

[GROWLEARNGARDEN.COM/POST/WINTER](https://growlearngarden.com/post/winter)

# NAME THAT PLANT PART

Each plant is unique, but they all have similar parts. Take a look at the tomato plant and see if you can write the correct labels for each part.



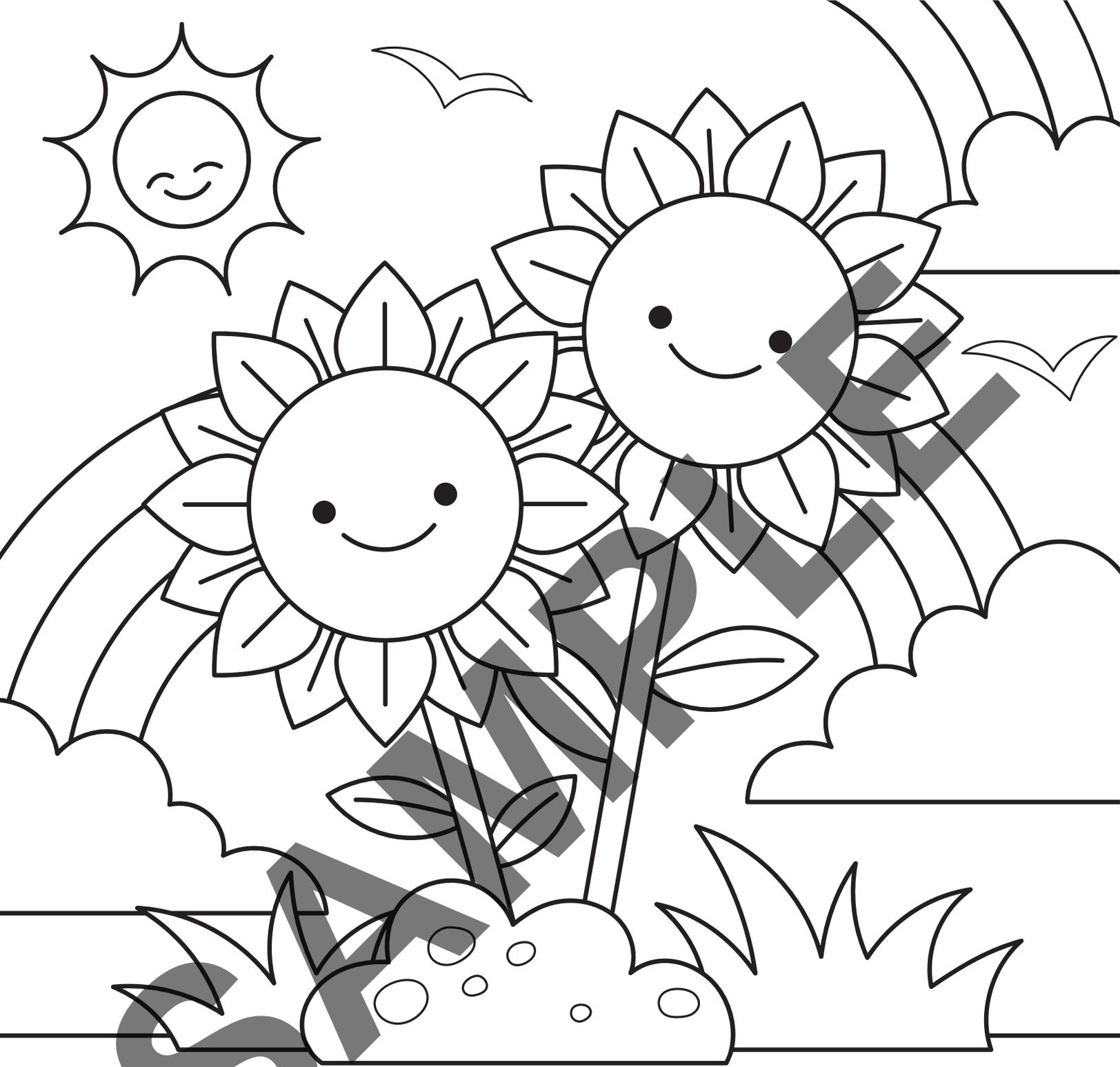
roots

flower

leaf

stem

fruit



**BLOOM WHERE YOU  
ARE PLANTED.**

# SUN OR SHADE?

Every garden begins with one big question: **how much sun will your plants get?**

Plants need sunlight to make their own food through **photosynthesis**.

Without enough sun, they grow tall and spindly, like they're reaching for something just out of reach.

You might end up with huge tomato plants, but only a handful of tiny tomatoes. Worse, weak plants often attract more bugs and diseases.



## TRY IT YOURSELF

*Go outside and find three spots in your yard. Which one has:*

- Full sun all day
- Part sun (about half the day)
- Shade most of the day

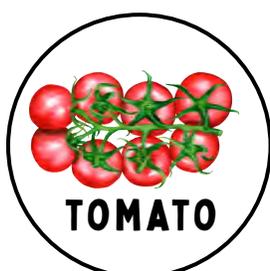
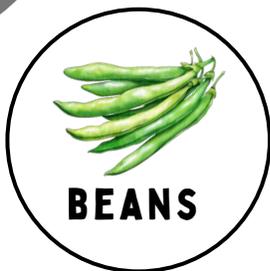


*Record the sun pattern on the chart and draw a quick map showing those spots.*

# SUN HOUR DETECTIVE

Cut out the plants and match them to the amount of sun they need.

|              |  |  |  |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| 3 TO 4 HOURS |  |  |  |
| 5 TO 6 HOURS |  |  |  |
| 7+ HOURS     |  |  |  |



## RECORD THE SUN PATTERN

Observe your chosen spots throughout the day and color in the corresponding sun patterns.

☀ = Full Sun   ☁☀ = Partial Sun   ☁ = Shade

|   | 10 AM  | 12 PM  | 2 PM   | 4 PM   |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1 | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ |
| 2 | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ |
| 3 | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ | ☀ ☁☀ ☁ |

Once you've made your observations, it's time to determine how much sun each spot has!

- 6+ hours? Full sun
- 4-6 hours? Part sun
- Less than 4 hours? Shade

Based on your observations, which is the best spot?

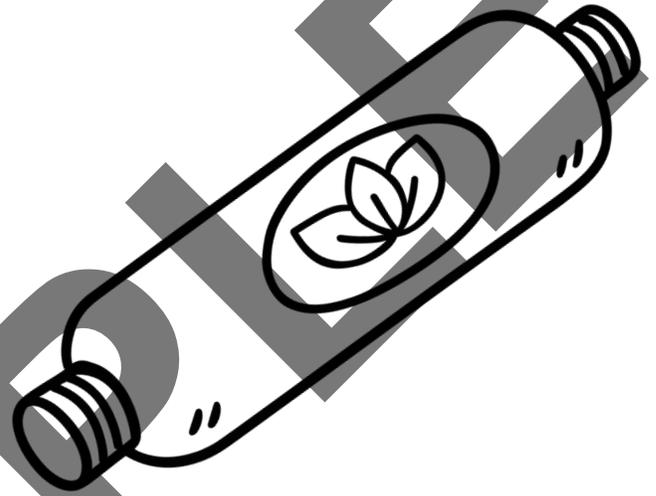
## MAP YOUR SPOTS

# THE SIMPLE FIX

If you use city water, you'll need a special garden hose filter.

It screws right onto your hose and removes chlorine and chloramine, making the water safe for your Tower Garden.

You'll need to replace it about once a year—or sooner if your water starts smelling like chlorine.



TRY IT YOURSELF

*Next time you water, look at the hose. Where would the filter attach? Draw a picture showing the hose + filter + Tower Garden.*

[GROWLEARNGARDEN.COM/POST/  
FILTER](http://GROWLEARNGARDEN.COM/POST/FILTER)



# CHLORINATED VS. UNCHLORINATED WATER

## QUESTION

Do plants grow better with unchlorinated water or chlorinated water?

## HYPOTHESIS (MY GUESS)

I think plants will grow better with \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Two small plants or seedlings
- Two cups or containers
- Unchlorinated water (filtered or bottled)
- Chlorinated water (tap water)



## WHAT TO DO:

1. Label one cup Unchlorinated Water and one Chlorinated Water.
2. Give each plant the same amount of light, nutrients, and care — only the water should be different.
3. Observe both plants for several days.
4. Record what you notice about color, growth, and leaf health.

## PLANT GROWTH OBSERVATIONS:

Chlorinated Water: \_\_\_\_\_

Unchlorinated Water: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONCLUSION:

The plant watered with \_\_\_\_\_ grew better because \_\_\_\_\_.

# WEEKLY GARDENING TASKS

Every week, your Tower Garden needs a deeper check-up – kind of like taking your car in for a tune-up. These jobs help your garden stay strong all season.

- Trim big plants** – if tomatoes or zucchini are taking over, prune them back so other plants get sunlight.
- Clean or check filter** – trim any roots near the filter.
- Rotate plants (*if needed*)** – move plants in weaker sun spots to better light.
- Plant new seedlings** – direct seed if you're short on time.
- Record observations in your garden journal** – note what grew, what problems you saw, and what you'd change.



# KEEPING CRITTERS OUT

Sometimes, animals think your Tower Garden is their snack bar!

Iguanas, squirrels, possums, or even raccoons may sneak in to nibble your veggies. Luckily, there's a way to stop them: **build a screened-in enclosure.**



**Why it helps:** Screens keep out most animals while still letting sun and air reach your plants.

**Smart design:** Some gardeners add built-in cages around their towers for extra protection.



THINK ABOUT IT

*Draw your dream "Garden Fortress." Would you build a screen house? A fence? Maybe even a moat? Label your drawing with what critters it protects against.*