

Grow an oak tree

Turn a tiny acorn into a mighty oak.

What you need

- Acorns
- Bucket
- Water
- Zip-lock bag
- Sawdust
- Small plant pots
- Potting soil
- Water

WOW!

A single mature tree produces around 120 kilograms of oxygen per year. That means two mature trees can supply enough oxygen to support a family of four every year.



1 Start by visiting a forest or your local park – anywhere where there are oak trees – and collect some acorns.



2 Take off the acorns' caps and pop them in a bucket and add water. Get rid of any that float – these are going bad.



3 Put the good acorns in a large zip-lock bag filled with damp sawdust. Store them in the fridge for about a month and a half until they sprout.



4 After about 45 days, check each acorn to see whether a root has cracked through the bottom. If it has, the acorn is ready to plant.



5 Plant each acorn in a small pot using good-quality potting soil. Place the pots on a windowsill and water frequently. Don't let the soil dry out.



6 When your seedlings are 25cm high, transfer them to a larger pot. After one or two years, the young trees will be ready to plant in a garden or allotment.

How does it work?

Trees start their lives as tiny seeds. When the conditions are right, seeds start to sprout roots. This is known as germination. Once the seed has been planted in nutrient-rich soil, shoots sprout upwards while the roots continue to grow downwards. Eventually, leaves begin to grow on the shoots. Green plants make their own food by a process called photosynthesis. Photosynthesis happens in the leaves, with the help of a special green substance called chlorophyll. The leaves capture the Sun's energy and use it to combine with water, nutrients and carbon dioxide to make sugar and oxygen. The oxygen is released back into the air and the sugar helps the tree grow.



TOP TIP
Choose fat, ripe acorns, which are nice and brown all over. Ignore any that are green (these are unripe) or dark (these have started to rot).