

How to create a mini meadow in a small flowerbed or 1-2 m² plot



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City of Meadows

Schools helping nature thrive in Brighton & Hove



SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK TRUST



Mini Meadow: a small flowerbed or plot of 1-2 m²

1. Choose a plot

Think about where best to locate your meadow, somewhere visible which won't get trampled on during playtimes.

Tip

Wildflower seeds grow best in a sunny spot

2. Mark your plot

It's vital that your area is clearly marked so that both your students and grounds maintenance team know what it is, especially before it is well established.

Tip

Use spare turf, a simple fence or stakes and rope to mark the boundaries and add a sign to explain what you're doing.



Thank you for helping us create a City of Meadows.

By working with schools across the city, we can create a network of pollinator habitats throughout the city, helping nature thrive in Brighton & Hove.

3. Prepare your plot

It's best to start with bare soil, so first you need to remove any existing vegetation:

- If you've chosen a small flowerbed or patch of soil, you'll need to weed it thoroughly first. Grass and more vigorous plants will compete with and smother your wildflowers, so dig them up and remove them

- If you've chosen a patch of grass, remove the turf. Use a garden spade to cut small squares in the turf (e.g.



- 30cm x 30cm) and dig out each square individually until you've cleared the plot entirely. You can use this turf to create a mound in another area of your grounds.

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4. Firm & Rake

Firm and rake the soil to create a fine seedbed.

Tip

Get rid of any large clumps of soil and create a lovely fine, crumbly bed for your seeds to lie on. Make sure it's firm though, so your seeds don't sink too deep!



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5. Scatter your seed

Scatter your wildflower seed evenly across the whole plot. It helps to sow half lengthways along the plot, then half widthways — and you can mix your seed with dry silver sand (the type used for block paving) or fine peat-free compost to make scattering easier.

Tip

A little goes a long way! Just 3-5g of seed is enough for one square metre of soil

6. Rake (again)

Rake lightly and give your seeds a gentle sprinkle of water.

Tip

Don't add any manure or fertiliser – wildflowers flourish on nutrient-poor soils

7. Water and wait

Keep an eye on the weather and water your mini meadow when it's needed. Your seeds should sprout after 2 – 3 weeks

Tip

Remember to keep watering your mini meadow so that the soil doesn't dry out – aim to keep it moist but not soggy



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Using plug plants

If you're using plug plants to create your Mini Meadow, prepare your plot as in step 1 above, then plant your plugs – don't be tempted to plant too closely, as they will soon grow!

You could also do a bit of both – plant a few plugs to get your mini meadow started, and sow wildflower seed around them. Plug plants will need regular watering.

Tip

It takes time for a meadow to establish, and most will evolve over several years into a truly beautiful display of flowers full of bees, butterflies and other insects.



Tip

When adding plug plants, spread mulch around the plants or replace the turf upside-down to help reduce competition.



Aftercare...

You may want your students to collect the seeds in September before they drop, ready to sow again next Spring. Alternatively, you can cut the meadow early September using grass shears.

Cut in dry weather and leave the cuttings to lie on your meadow for a week or so before removing and composting them. This allows seeds to drop and replenish your meadow. It's important to remove the cuttings so that they do not enrich the soil.

Alternatively, leave your meadow (or part of it) un-cut over winter and cut in early spring. The dead stems will provide excellent insect hibernation spaces over winter. You may want to 'top-up' your meadow in its first years of life by sowing more seed to fill any bare patches.

