

## PLANTING PEAS: SOME OPTIONS

Local advice from our friend Elizabeth:

Hi All, I have been trying a new technique (at least for me) of starting peas in sections of guttering (which I got at Resource) in the greenhouse, growing them on until they are about 4 inches tall, and then transferring them to a trench in the garden. So far it seems to be working fairly well. The peas germinate really fast and grow quickly in the greenhouse. You could probably do it in a house too. I plug up the ends of the guttering with a piece of foam and duct tape. When I am ready to transfer them, I dig a trench, remove the foam and duct tape, spread the sides of the guttering away from the soil, and slide them out of the guttering into the trench. The sliding is the tricky part. I have found it takes two people to go well: one to guide and encourage the peas along, and one to lift and shake the guttering, as you have to get it to a fairly steep angle for the peas to slide. I'm using galvanized guttering, but plastic might work better as it would be smoother. So far they have adapted well to the outdoors, and we shall see how they grow on and produce. There's lots of videos of this on the web. Thought this might be a good solution to slow germination in our really unpredictable springs.

Local advice from our friend Frank:

I haven't had trouble with slow germination. I've done several experiments with peas including staggering plantings over a month and found they all came up at about the same time when weather conditions were right.

Now, I do hedge my bets and just pre-sprout the seeds...(soak overnight, rinse, drain then grow like sprouts in a warm spot till little tails shown up. ) I plant the peas and I put down some light frost cover over them to provide a little extra moisture and hide them from birds.

I pre-sprout most seeds that are big enough to handle. I hate waiting and wondering. But germination is never a problem ....it a predictable speed based on temperature. It helps to know what ideal germination is.

According to Deno, peas at 68 degrees germinate from direct sowing in 7-14 days. If temps are colder it is going to take longer. <http://tomclothier.hort.net/page07.html>

Tom Clothier made a chart based on Demi's results:

Optimum germination of peas occurs in 6 days at 77 degrees maximum soil temperature.

If it's cold after you plant, you have to wait. Peas at 41 degrees maximum daytime soil temperature take 36 days to germinate. <http://tomclothier.hort.net/page11.html>

Your results will vary as the weather varies. Some causes of failure to germinate is if it is too wet and the seeds rot, if birds get the seeds, or if the seeds germinate and start to grow but aren't watered and dry out.

Unofficially, peas pre-soaked and then kept in a mason jar on top of my fridge germinate in 2-3 days.

The frost (Row-Cover) cloth works for me. Cold frames that can be moved or opened as the peas get tall are ideal.