

ROOTRAINERS K2 (01)
Instructions



Rootrainers are unique as they open up for easy transplanting, have grooves to direct roots downwards and have extra valuable depth. They are the perfect start for a wide variety of plants, especially those that require deep root runs and those that are sensitive to disturbance. For example:

- trees and woody shrubs (from seed or cutting),
- herbaceous plants,
- annuals (eg. sweet peas)
- vegetables (e.g. beans, peas, brussel sprouts)
- soft fruit (e.g. strawberries)

GUIDELINES FOR USE

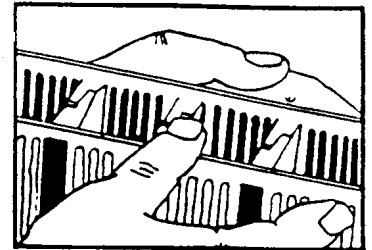
Rootrainers are simple and versatile to use. There are just four important guidelines to follow:

MAKING UP

Peel off one 'book' from the pack and fold in half. Place the folded books one by one into the tray until it is completely full.

PLEASE NOTE: it is important to use all the books provided in the pack as they should fit tightly, with shoulders locking.

Once the books are fitted into the tray they will not fall out, and the tray is firm and stable for handling.

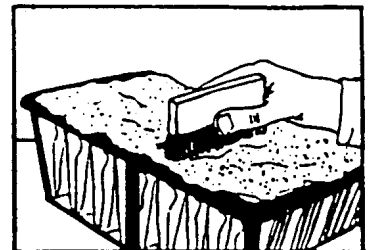


FILLING

The trays should be filled from the top with Roottrainer books closed and in position. Cover the tray with compost and shake or bump it to settle the compost into the bottom of the cells. Repeat the process until each cell is full and brush off surplus compost with a firm brush.

It is not recommended to fill the cells to the brim - you should be able to see the division between each cell.

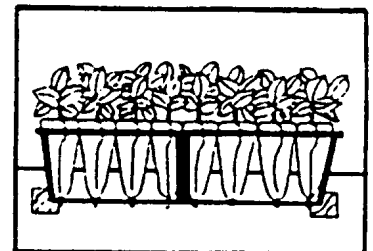
The compost may be lightly tapped, but care should be taken to make it not too firm.



AIR PRUNING

The tray is hollow and the books have large drainage holes. This is to allow the important process of Air Pruning, whereby roots emerging from the drainage holes are allowed to naturally dry off. This in turn encourages the plant to produce more roots, which are directed straight downwards by the grooves. The roots do not circle round and round and the plant does not become pot bound. Before transplanting the plant will have plenty of fibrous roots and a good 'Root to Shoot ratio'.

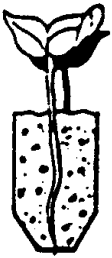
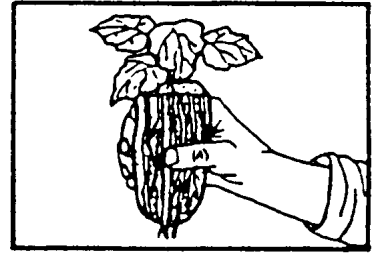
Once the roots begin to emerge from the bottom of the cells - after the initial propagation phase - the tray should be raised off the bench by at least 2" (more is preferred) to allow a good airflow underneath. If the tray is left too long on a solid bench, the roots may tangle together below the tray.



TRANSPLANTING

When the root system is well formed (balanced) and will hold the plug together, the plants are ready for transplanting. Simply remove a book of Roottrainers from the tray, open it up and lift out a plant.

Note: Plants can be inspected in a similar way during the growing phase but without removing the plants from the book.



First root grows straight through drainage hole and dries off



Lateral roots then quickly grow out & straight down special grooves, which prevent spiralling.



These lateral roots also grow through drainage hole & dry off, which Promotes further root development

TIPS

REUSE: Roottrainers are re-useable several times with care. They are easily washed or sterilized with the books in place.

WATERING: Roottrainers drain very well and care should be taken to provide adequate water supply. Naturally very small plants should not be over-watered, whilst larger plants should not be allowed to dry out. The opening facility helps in monitoring conditions.

PROPAGATION: Seeds can be germinated or cuttings struck under normal cultural practice, with the trays directly on the bench. Bottom heat, and / or mist, and / or plastic covering can be used as required. Only when the roots emerge should the tray be raised above the bench. Before transplanting outside, plants should be hardened off in a cold frame as normal.

COMPOST: A peat based compost is recommend. This should be a medium coarse mix, with a good open structure but not too fibrous. Additions of either composted bark, washed quartz sand or vermiculite, or mixes of all three, should be added to maintain the structure and aid drainage. Too much sand is not recommended - not more than 2½ - as the plug will be too loose and gritty to hold together. Bark is preferred up to a maximum of 30%, but it should be well composted.