

# PLANT A MINI ORCHARD



## IT ONLY TAKES 5...

...fruit trees to make an orchard, and orchards are more than just apples! Traditional orchards in the Forth Valley and Clyde Valley regions were often under planted with soft fruits such as gooseberries, currants and berries. Having a mix of fruit, and varieties make the orchard better for biodiversity and will help attract more pollinators, which in turn help produce more fruit.

### APPLES

A very popular orchard fruit, with many varieties of both eating and cooking apples available. In traditional cider producing regions, people used to Wassail their apples trees in early Spring – this involved singing or chanting to the trees to awaken them and scare away evil spirits to ensure a good harvest in autumn. Apples have many uses, though perhaps the most famous is a pie!



### PEARS

As with apples, there are dessert pears for eating and cooking pears for cooking, which are both at their best in autumn. Pear trees can take up a lot of space and take a long time to produce edible fruit, so consider planting something that has been grafted onto dwarf root stock. It also usually best to plant 2 compatible trees for more reliable pollination.



### PLUMS

Plums are a good cropping fruit, though they often have a low yield on alternate years. Many varieties are grown on dwarf root stock meaning that they don't need much space and can be pruned to a manageable size. The fruit can range from a deep blueish purple through to a light pinky yellow colour, and can be eaten straight from the tree or used in pies, cakes or jams.



### BLACKBERRIES

Blackberries grow wild everywhere, but are also a great addition to an orchard providing a different kind of habitat to any other soft fruit. They tend to grow in a tangle of climbing branches which can be trained up a structure to make harvesting easier. They are vigorous and will need to be pruned regularly. The fruit is often slightly bitter and works well when combined with sweeter fruit such as apples in pies, puddings or jams.



### GOOSEBERRIES

An easy to grow soft fruit which does well in small spaces and can be grown in containers. There are green or red varieties producing fruit of that colour, which can either be eaten raw or cooked. Early fruit is often sour and is best cooked, making good jams or fruit tea. Common culinary uses are pies, foos or crumbles and they work well mixed with other fruit in summer puddings.



### CHERRIES

Sweet cherries can be quite difficult to grow in Scotland, as they need sunny sheltered spots in order for the fruit to ripen, but they do grow well in containers so can be moved around a garden as the sun changes. Sour cherries on the other hand tolerate shade well and can make use of spaces against north facing walls. Sour cherries should be cooked, and makes delicious jams, whilst sweet cherries are lovely straight from the tree.



### RASPBERRIES

There are many varieties of raspberry that grow well in Scotland, many are autumn fruiting and take advantage of sunny autumn evenings, fruiting well into October. They are very versatile, and can be cooked, frozen, made into jam, jelly or cordial, included in puddings, ice creams or eaten raw. The young leaves of the plants also make a raspberry tea.



### CURRANTS

Red and black currants are closely related, though red currants are often grown similarly to gooseberries. Both can tolerate some shade, but the fruit will ripen quicker in full sun – birds love the fruit, so the longer they stay on the bush, the smaller your harvest might be! Currants are traditionally used in jams and jellies, though they are also great additions to puddings, cakes and savoury dishes.

