

## How to grow your Strawberry Plant for the Summer Show, 22 June 2024 - Class 105

Your strawberry plant will arrive in a small pot. You will need to transplant it into a larger pot (about 18cm diameter) as soon as possible so it has more space to grow. The healthy roots may already have grown out through the holes at the bottom of the small pot.

Choose a sunny, sheltered place for your Strawberry plant to grow outside, or in a greenhouse if you have one. Find a saucer to stand the plant pot on so that water doesn't just drain through the compost and away.

The main thing to remember is to keep the plants moist (but not waterlogged). Use rain water from a water butt if you have one, but otherwise tap water will be fine. Let it warm up a bit in the watering can (and use a rose for a fine spray) otherwise you shock the plant (bit like jumping into a cold swimming pool). It's a good idea to fill the cans straight after watering so they will have time to warm up a bit and be ready for the next watering.

Once the flowers appear, you can feed with Tomorite or similar. Be careful not to water onto the fruit otherwise your developing strawberry may rot. You may find it easier to water into the saucer under your pot, and watch it disappearing as it is absorbed by the compost.

There are other creatures who may try to enjoy your strawberries once they start to ripen. If you are not happy to share with slugs and birds, then you will need to provide some protection for the strawberries. Check around the plants and under the pot and saucer for slugs and snails hiding there. They like dark, moist places and come out to feed at night. To keep the birds off, you may need to make a little house using netting.

A suggestion of how to do this is shown below:



Good luck with growing your sweet, juicy strawberries and we look forward to seeing your plant at the Summer Show in June with strawberries unless you have enjoyed eating them already!