

blackmoor

Blackmoor

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Dear Customer,

Thank you for ordering from Blackmoor Nurseries. We trust you will be pleased with your plants and by following our growing guide below we hope you have many years of success with them. Our plants have been professionally grown on our Nursery with the correct attention to nutrients, and pest and disease control. They are despatched in good condition ready to establish and thrive in your garden for many years to come.

Please unpack and inspect your plants immediately on arrival.

CARE GUIDE FOR STRAWBERRIES

Sweet and versatile, strawberries are the essence of a British summer and delicious when eaten freshly picked. Strawberry plants will yield good crops of fruit when grown in small spaces (including containers) and growbag cultivation is particularly economical and productive. The small, short-lived perennial plants are suitable for autumn or spring planting, and a little extra time spent now in caring for your autumn-planted runners and finding the right location to grow a container of cold-stored strawberry plants will help to improve your chances of a bumper summer harvest.

Strawberries grow well in the ground, but they can suffer from soil-borne pests and diseases if grown on the same patch for a number of years. Where space is at a premium, strawberries will also fare well for a year or two in grow bags, troughs, pots and hanging baskets, and this approach has several advantages over plants grown in the open. Strawberries in containers can be given a prime position - they prefer a sunny but sheltered spot and being raised off the ground, which helps to produce a more stable microclimate. Containers can be brought under protection (such as a glasshouse or porch) to advance fruit cropping and then replaced once fruiting is over. Container-grown strawberries also suffer from fewer problems with soil-borne pests and diseases, and are at a more convenient height for picking.

Planting: When preparing pots for planting strawberries, use soil less composts or those with a low loam content, as these weigh less and make heavy containers such as large terracotta strawberry pots more portable. Strawberries like well-drained soil that is rich in humus, so dig in lots of compost or manure. They prefer to be planted in full sun, and sheltered from the wind.

Do not pre-soak bare root runners prior to planting as they are liable to rot.

If planting into the soil, space at 14-16 inches apart in the rows and leave 60 inches between rows. They can be planted in double rows if space is at a premium.

Soil Preparation: Strawberries do not produce deep roots, but they prefer their soil being well dug to a spades depth. Prepare the soil at least one month before planting. Incorporate as much organic matter as possible and include two handfuls of bonemeal per square metre (yard). A few

days before planting apply the recommended dose of general fertiliser such as Growmore. Strawberries are greedy feeders over a relatively short period of time.

Plant freshly dug runners in late autumn - early winter to allow proper establishment and a good crop in the first summer. Cold-stored runners can be planted in spring but the crop may be less successful in the first summer. Always use stock that is certified virus free.

As soon as growth commences in spring provide a balanced liquid feed (with similar levels of nitrogen and potassium) each week. During flowering and fruiting use a high-potash feed such as a tomato fertiliser, and then revert to a balanced feed if the plants are to be kept for a second year. Strawberry plants that are overfed will produce lush leaf growth at the expense of fruit.

A winter chilling will help plants flower effectively - Keep the containers at ground level in a sheltered situation and if severe frosts are forecast cover with frost protection such as horticultural fleece or straw, which should then be removed during the day.

This guide is for general information purposes only as site and soil conditions and requirements vary greatly.