

PARC MAENOR  
**SCOLTON**  
MANOR PARK

A decorative background featuring stylized green foliage, including various leaf shapes and a row of small bushes at the bottom, all in shades of green.

# Making Your Own Orchard

**PLANT SELECTION, PROPAGATION,  
PLANTING AND MANAGEMENT**

# Plant Selection and Preparation

Fruit types grafted on rootstocks:

- Apple
- Pear
- Plum
- Cherry

The best time to graft these cuttings (called scions) is January to February.

Fruit types using rooted cuttings:

- Currants
- Gooseberries
- Blackberry
- Tayberry
- Fig

The best time to take these cuttings is July to September.

Fruit types using other methods:

- Rhubarb: take divisions in February to March
- Strawberry: take runners in July to September
- Raspberry: take one year old rootstocks in October to December

Fruit trees such as the ones in the pink box above, are commonly grafted onto specific rootstocks rather than grown on their own roots. This helps reduce the overall size of the tree, allows for a uniform growth when using a range of different varieties and also encourages earlier fruiting.

This is a more skilled operation requiring specific rootstocks that are available online in winter ready for grafting in the spring.

<https://walcotnursery.co.uk/product-category/rootstocks/>  
<https://www.ashridgetrees.co.uk/apple-rootstock-pear-rootstock>  
<https://gb-online.co.uk/neweshop/index.php>

If you want to graft, you should order rootstocks early, they come in minimum 5 quantities. Collect your Mother tree cuttings between November and January, wrap them in cling-film and put in the fridge until you are ready to graft.

However, if you have the space and you are happy with varying sizes of fruit tree, you can grow all these fruit trees from rooted cuttings.

For more information, visit the following webpage:

<https://www.frankpmatthews.com/advice/>

## Further instructions



Contact your mother orchard owner via [www.cwmarian.org.uk/eincoed](http://www.cwmarian.org.uk/eincoed) one month in advance to organise collection of suitable cuttings.



You will need to bring several polythene bags, labels and a pencil.

Ensure you have a cold frame or rooting area ready to use before you collect your cuttings. A suitable rooting mixture of 50% sharp sand and 50% peat free compost in a well-lit position out of full sun is ideal. Deep pots or a cold frame with minimum 20cm depth of rooting medium is suitable with poly bags tied onto pots or glazed lids over cold frame to cover your cuttings once struck.



## Planting

Rooting hormone is helpful for the fruit cuttings with cut stems just lightly dipped into the powder before insertion.

Leave cuttings in situ until they bud up and leaf out the following autumn, then pot up individually into a large pot of good compost and grow on outside for another full year before planting out into their final growing space.

For grafted fruit trees you would plant at points spaced out according to the rootstock type you have used. However if you have decided to grow from cuttings (i.e. on their own roots), you would need to plant them 8 - 10 metres apart to allow for the extra size they will grow. Full fruiting may take 3 to 6 years from planting - smaller trees fruit earliest, with taller trees taking longer to fruit - and accept that pruning and harvesting will be on raised platforms or ladders.

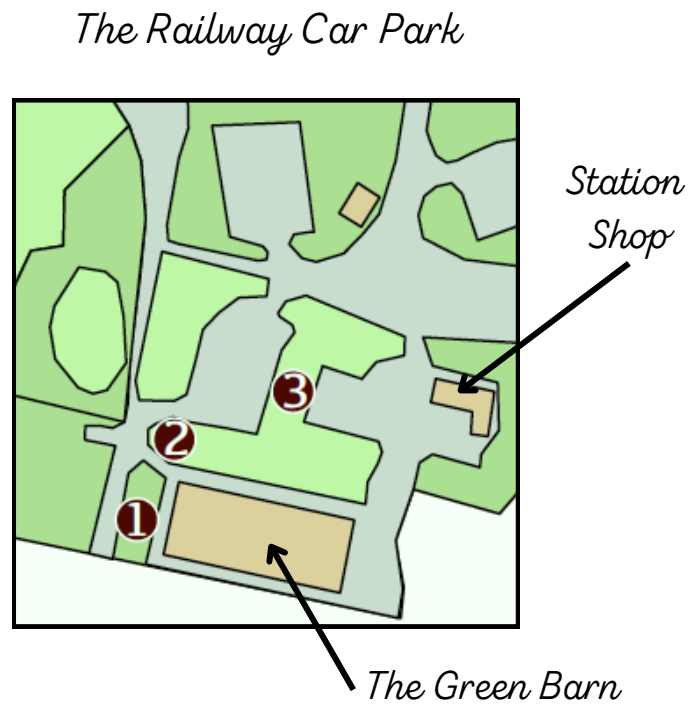
Although fruit trees are often grown in an orchard setting, another way to grow them is as a mixed species hedgerow.

If your site is exposed to the elements or with a poor soil then hedgerow planting could provide a more reliable option for fruit and nut production with a mixture of native fruiting plants providing foraged fruit, shelter, nitrogen fixing and leaf mulch supporting the more delicate fruits whilst being a terrific resource for nature.



At Scolton Manor we have three different demonstration hedgerows of fruit and nut trees, which are described in some detail on the pages that follow.

The locations of these hedgerows are indicated on the map of the Railway Car Park to the left marked 1, 2 and 3 accordingly.



## **Demo Hedgerow 1**

Wild native fruit, nut and herb species combined as a complete edible hedgerow. These tend to be naturally variable in growth habit and fruiting but are very tough and hardy, not needing any special attention and will provide valuable habitat and food for nature as well as useful wild crops of forage for you. They are easy to establish, inexpensive to obtain as they are usually seed propagated and once established are tolerant of wide ranging site conditions. Typical plants include wild crab apple, blackberry, wild rosehips, blackthorn for sloe and elderflower.

Plants can be planted in a wide hedgerow with 2 to 4 metres spacing between most plants, further apart for larger trees, allowing enough space to grow and be harvested. A thick 10cm mulch of each year in the spring helps keep weeds down and holds moisture in the soil.

## Demo Hedgerow 2

This hedge contains improved forms of native fruit and nut species. These have been recognized by interested people over time, perhaps spotted growing beside others with larger fruit size or heavier cropping in a hedgerow as an enhanced form of wild plant, and have been cultivated by taking cuttings, thereby maintaining the beneficial genetic natural variation. We have brought together many examples of these and planted them together as an enhanced edible native hedgerow.

Similar to the native hedgerow 1, they are hardy and easy to grow but will be more expensive to buy as they have had to be grown by vegetative propagation, usually cuttings or micro-propagation. Typical plants would be cobnuts selected from hazel, thorn-less forms of blackberry, larger fruited forms of rowan and elderflower berries with increased levels of vitamin C.

Pruning in early years to help form an open centre to trees is necessary but the plants will take care of themselves once established. Trimming to provide better access and visual shape is straightforward - this is best done after harvest each year.

If you want a bigger, more reliable crop of fruits, have a reasonable growing site and are able to spend some time managing your plants, then the higher yielding modern fruit plants would be a good choice.

## Demo Hedgerow 3

This hedgerow provides a modern example of how we obtain our fruit today, most often using extensively bred hybrid varieties of fruit, in this example apples and pears, all grown on selected dwarfing rootstocks to manage vigour and suitability to the climate and soil. They are pruned and managed for maximum fruit production usually within an intensively planted orchard setting.

We have trained these fruit on a post and wire system as inclined cordons, 3m apart in the row, allowing many different varieties to be grown in a single uniform row. They need heavy pruning in summer to encourage fruit bud formation and again in the winter to keep the shape and vigour in balance with the space allocated.

For best fruit performance, these fruit trees are best grown as grafted trees using our cuttings as the scion and obtaining suitable rootstocks for grafting onto in the winter/spring. Cwm Arian often provide courses for this skilled activity. Please contact the Ein Coed Facebook group, a link to which can be found on their webpage: <https://www.cwmarian.org.uk/eincoed>.







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