

# Home & Garden

## How to select quality peat pot transplants

Young plants are more susceptible to harm in the first seven days after transplanting into the garden than at any other time of their development.

Tender plants, such as tomatoes, peppers, petunias, impatiens and begonias should not be planted until all danger of frost is past, since planting too early is probably the largest cause of loss among bedding plants.

Animals and insect pests can be controlled by a range of products available through local garden supply centers. Vegetable dusts can work effectively against rabbits and insects, while pellets are a good deterrent against slug damage.

Just as there are good and poor quality seeds, it's possible to have good and poor quality transplants. Here are some ways to recognize top quality transplants.

Avoid long, lanky specimens that

have had to stretch toward the light, or have produced spindly growth owing to overcrowding of roots. A dwarf, compact, bushy plant with some side shoots formed is better than a long thin straggly specimen.

Look for a healthy, dark green color in salvias, marigolds, petunias, tomatoes and most other popular bedding plants. Plants with shriveled, yellowed or wilted leaves should be avoided.

When you buy plants in peat pots, gently tear off the bottom of the pot and release the roots. Although roots will penetrate the peat, and the peat eventually decomposes, a dry period could keep the roots pot-bound and hinder good development. To ensure a healthy plant, gently remove bottom or sides without tearing roots.

Immediately after transplanting, water all plants thoroughly.



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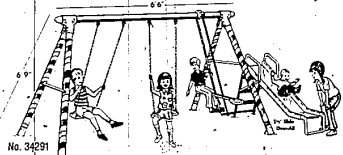
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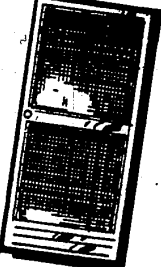
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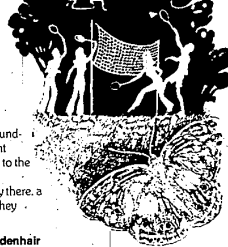
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