

# The bounty of the greenhouse and a lesson in keeping a garden journal

We are eating tomatoes and peppers from the greenhouse, along with carrots and courgettes from the beds – hooray! Nothing beats that feeling of making a meal with produce from the garden, bring on the smugness.

However, when I sat down to write this post for you today to tell you about the exciting news, I was about to misinform you (shock horror, Eli say it isn't true!) I have been so excited to tell you guys about how amazing it is that we have tomatoes and peppers early this year, normally we have to wait till the end of august before we get anything ripe from the greenhouse. I was super excited guys, but alas, I was wrong.

Remember that post last year I gave you guys where I told you all the benefits of keeping a gardening journey? Well here is a prime example.

[A gardening journal – the most essential piece of gardening kit for newbies](#)

I was convinced that normally we didn't see ripe fruit in the greenhouse until late August, absolutely convinced. I have even said this to Kate a few times over the last couple of weeks and she didn't disagree with me, but for some reason,

when I sat down to write this post today I decided to leaf through my journal and look at the dates when I recorded our first ripe tomatoes. I did the same with past blog posts. I'm glad I did, cause you know what, we ALWAYS have ripe tomatoes in July.



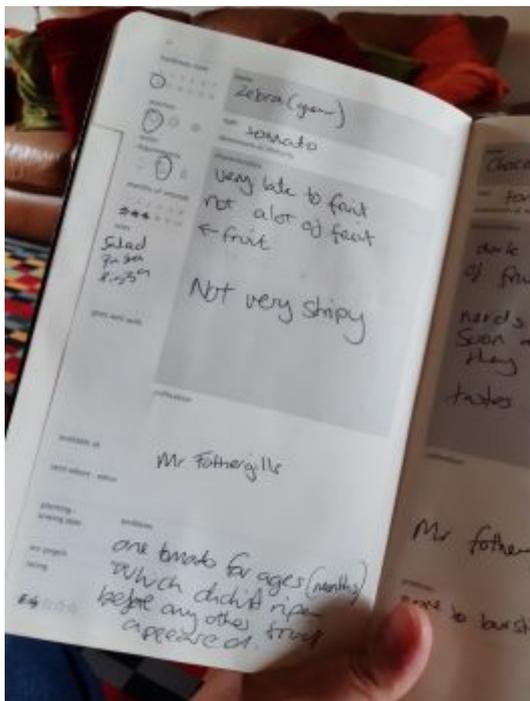
Look at these little lovelies

I am so disappointed, not in having ripe tomatoes to eat, cause lets be honest, that's a joy, but just the excitement of the ripe tomatoes is dismissed slightly, sigh! Ach well, glad I had my journal to check before I posted a big, fat, lie for you guys. See, garden journals are a good thing.

So now I'm sitting here with my coffee enjoying a read through my journal and remembering previous years and seeing how much I have changed and grown as a gardener. It's actually fun to wallow in the nostalgia.

# My very first journal entry

Unsurprisingly, my first journal entries were for tomatoes, but what is fun to look back on are the types of tomatoes we grew in our first year. The focus was very much on how they looked. We grew, Tigerella, Zebra (green stripe) and Chocolate Cherry.



You can see that my notes had mentions of my disappointment that they weren't very stripy, but what is a useful note is that I recorded that there was only one fruit on the plant for the first few months and it didn't ripen for ages. This is a really useful note for me in subsequent years, I know what to expect or if things are different the next year I know to look at any changes I made to my habits and processes.

So how have things changed? Well the first couple of years, the journal tells me that we grew fruit and veg based on

appearance, we got really excited about stripy green tomatoes and bullseye marked beetroot. Now we are growing things which we know have flavours we like, but we only know this because we experimented and kept records. For instance, that chocolate cherry tomato from year one, I noted it had a good flavour which meant I tried it again. However, here is where the twist in the plot happens. The third year, I couldn't get seeds for that one, so I tried another cherry that was similar in the dark colour, the Indigo Blue Berry. That is now one of my favourite tomatoes and a staple. The flavour is out of this world guys!



Indigo Rose – turns from green to purple to rose pink (ish)

But again, last year we couldn't get seeds to grow it, so I tried something similar, Indigo Rose, which wasn't a cherry tomato. It looked like a larger version, but the flavour was really disappointing.

All of this is recorded in my journal so that each year I can make decisions based on experience.

## Going forward

So no surprise that I am still keeping my journal and recording the comings and goings of the garden then, but I am about to move it over to a digital journal. I'm running out of space in my paper journal and I'm finding it frustrating that I can't easily record photos etc. So after a recommendations from one of our readers (Lisa) I am slowly moving over to a digital notebook where I can quickly and easily add photos, videos and even audio notes. It's a slow process but I'm having fun.