



# SEED SOWING INSTRUCTIONS

## HORNBEAM

### Treating and growing on seed

**Need:** seed, polythene freezer bags, vermiculite [available from Garden Centres], seed tray/rigipot, peat free potting/seed compost, sharp sand, liquid fertiliser.  
Optional: fine grit, watering tray.

#### 1. STORAGE

Lay seed on newspaper to dry in cool conditions. When paper-dry, store seed in hessian sack, allowing them to breathe.

#### 2. STRATIFICATION

Begin process at **beginning of October**.

Steps :

##### a] **Preparation**

Soak seed over 7 day period, to remove chemical inhibitors to germination. Alternate 24 hours in water / 24 hours out, draining off water with a sieve. Use fresh water each time.

Pretreat seed in a medium. Mix moist vermiculite and compost with seed at a ratio of 3 parts seed to one of compost, and place in polythene bag or use a suitable plastic container if rodents are a problem.

Add water until damp - not much required - use a beaker or similar container.. Label seed inside bag and tie off top of bag.

Mark up bag with seed collection details : species, collection site, date.

##### b] **Pretreatment**

i] Store in warm conditions [15° - 18°C **max.**] for 4 weeks - use cool airing cupboard / warm room, in light or dark conditions.

Once a week open bag : mix seeds allowing carbon dioxide to escape and oxygen in. Re-moisten if necessary and remove any mouldy seeds.

ii] Store in cold conditions [1°-5°C] for 16 weeks **or** as long as seed takes to 'chit' [produce a root] - use fridge.  
Continue weekly routine as in i].

At first signs of chitting, check bag regularly for root emergence.

### 3. **SOWING**

Fill tray cells with compost to 1-2 cms. from top of tray. Bang on table to firm.

Sow seed in growing tray when root is about 1/2" long, using universal sowing / potting compost .

Fill tray asap with chitted seed [keeps growth even].

Do not sow seed with too long a shoot in a shallow seed tray. Sow seed with long roots in rigipot that has deep cells.

Cover compost in cells with fine grit / coarse sand if available.

### 4. **GROWING**

#### a] Positioning of tray

Put trays of early seedlings on windowsill/in **warm** greenhouse to avoid winter cold/frosts; if available move into cold frame/greenhouse in April/May, or else leave on windowsill. Grow outside during the summer.

Move trees outside in September to overwinter, avoiding excessive sunlight.

Ensure slugs / snails / rodents, etc. cannot get at the seedlings.

Turn the tray regularly to avoid bending of tree stems [seedlings grow towards the light].

#### b] Watering:

Water regularly- every 3-4 days in mid-summer. Water less regularly in winter, but enough to keep roots damp.

It is difficult to overwater in summer - if in doubt, be generous.

#### c] Feeding

Mix in liquid fertiliser when watering, if necessary. Ask for assistance if unclear.

### 6. **ADVICE SERVICE AND HELPLINE**

Please telephone COLIN CARPENTER if you have any queries, on :  
01525 716371 OR MOBILE 07751 356094