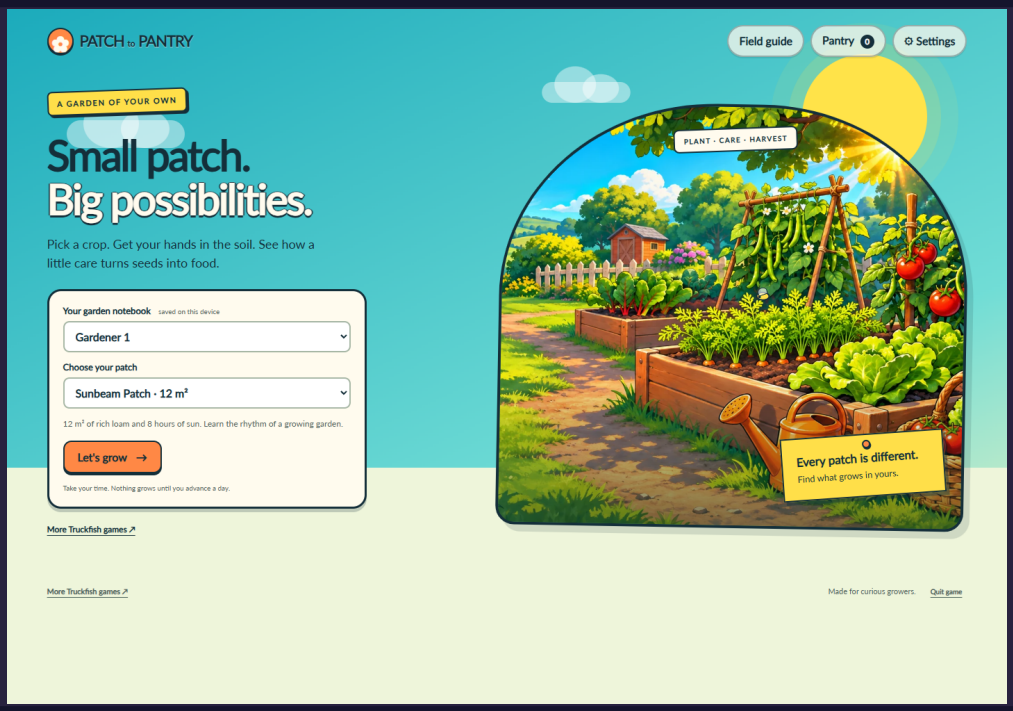
YOUR FIRST SEASON

The grower's notebook

A small patch can teach you a lot. Choose a crop, watch its roots and leaves, and count the food you actually pick.



Choose a local notebook and one of three gardens. The sunny loam patch is a useful first season.

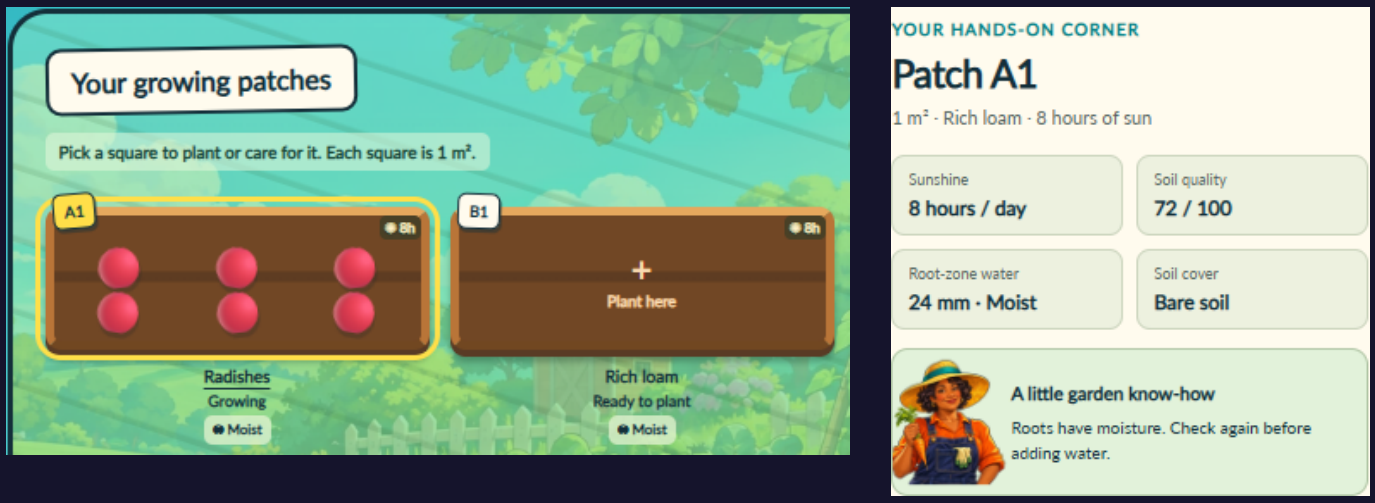
Start with the starter radishes

- Play in the browser, or extract the whole ZIP and open index.html. Continue past the Truckfish screen, choose your notebook and patch, then press Let's grow.
- Select the labeled starter radish square. It was planted 22 days before Day 1. Check its water advice, then advance the day. Press Harvest when it says it is ready.
- Try for your garden's portion goal and harvest at least three crop types. Open Your goals to see both targets. Day 120 ends the season; use Pause / menu to finish earlier.

There is no clock to race. The garden changes only when you press a day button. Crops stay exactly as you left them while the page is closed.

SUN, SOIL AND WATER

Read your patch



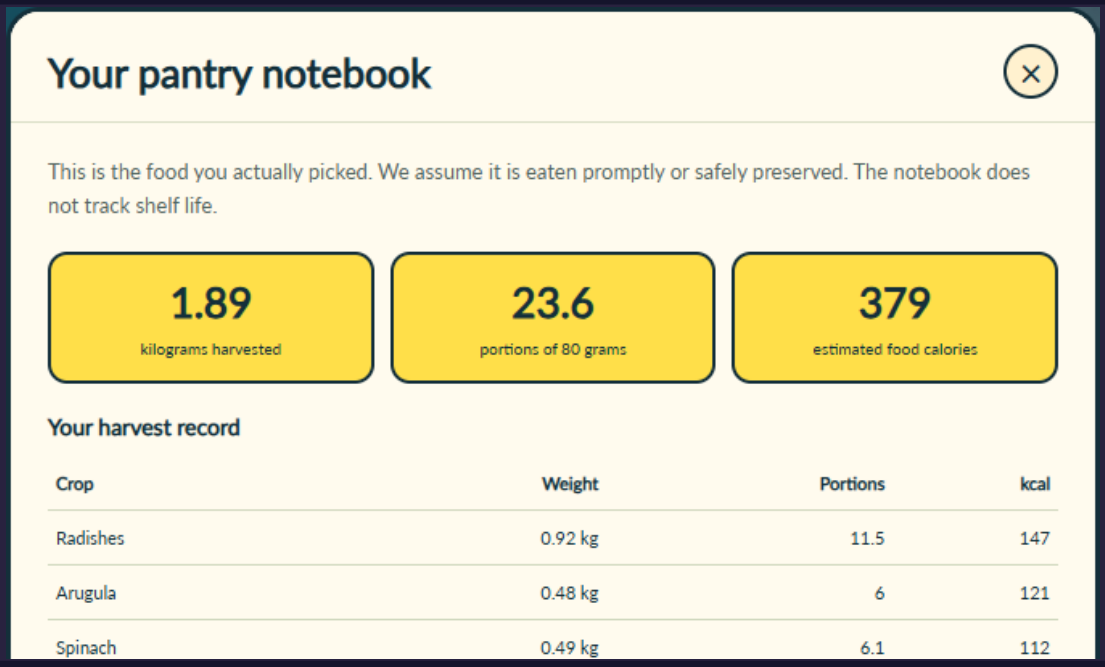
Actual game details: the selected starter square at left; sunlight, soil quality and root-zone water at right.

- Fit the crop to its place. Tomatoes need more sun than lettuce. Long carrots struggle in heavy clay. Sandy soil drains quickly; clay drains slowly. Compare the three gardens.
- Water the soil when it needs it. One watering adds 12 mm, or 12 liters to a 1 m² square. Check moisture and rain before adding more. Waterlogged roots can lose health.
- Add useful care. Finished compost improves fertility and water retention. Mulch slows moisture loss. Neither can supply missing sunlight.
- Move time carefully. Next day advances one day; 7 days checks every simulated day and stops for a newly ready harvest, a failed plant or a new waterlogging warning.
- Pick on time. The care panel shows the picking window. Only harvested food enters the pantry. Late roots become woody, lettuce bolts and fruit pickings can be lost. Clear failed or finished crops to plant again.

The garden is an imagined temperate, frost-free 120-day season. Maturity, weather, soil response and yield are simplified game rules. Real gardens also face local seasons, pests, disease and other conditions this game does not simulate.

WHAT REACHES THE TABLE

Understand your pantry



Actual 1.1.0 harvest: radishes, arugula and spinach. The worked example uses a separate, round 1 kg harvest.

One harvest, two comparisons

A game portion is 80 g. Portions describe the quantity of vegetables. Energy-equivalent days compare the food's calories with an explicit reference of 2,000 kcal per person per day. Children's and adults' actual needs vary.

Worked example: 1 kg of radishes
1,000 g / 80 g = 12.5 vegetable portions
1 kg x 10 x 16 kcal per 100 g = 160 kcal
160 / 2,000 = 0.08 person-days of energy
For four people: 160 / (4 x 2,000) = 0.02 days of energy
Portion comparison: 12.5 / (4 x 5) = 0.625 days at five portions each

Vegetables bring fiber, vitamins and variety. People need other foods as well. These comparisons do not count complete meals or establish a balanced diet. Energy uses raw-food composition values; cooking and added ingredients change food weight and energy.

The notebook counts harvest contribution and assumes produce is eaten promptly or safely preserved. It does not track spoilage or make fresh vegetables last indefinitely. The displayed totals are rounded; the simulation keeps the underlying values.

THIRTY CROPS, FIVE GROUPS

Greens, roots and bulbs

These are nominal game figures for suitable conditions. Poor care can delay the first picking. The Field guide gives each crop's planting method, water target, spacing, soil fit and edible part.

Greens & brassicas

Crop	First picking	Sun / day	Pickings
Leaf lettuce	40 days	4+ h	2
Spinach	38 days	4+ h	2
Kale	55 days	6+ h	4
Swiss chard	55 days	6+ h	4
Arugula	32 days	4+ h	2
Bok choy	45 days	6+ h	1
Cabbage	65 days	6+ h	1
Broccoli	60 days	6+ h	2
Cauliflower	75 days	6+ h	1

Roots & bulbs

Crop	First picking	Sun / day	Pickings
Radishes	28 days	6+ h	1
Carrots	70 days	6+ h	1
Beets	55 days	6+ h	1
Turnips	55 days	6+ h	1
Scallions	65 days	6+ h	1
Kohlrabi	55 days	6+ h	1

Controls and local notebooks

- Click or tap a square and its care buttons. Tab moves between controls; Enter or Space chooses. Esc opens the menu or closes a panel.
- F5 saves and F9 reloads. At title, N starts and C continues. Ctrl+Q opens Quit so you can save, return to title and close the tab.
- Settings has less movement, stronger contrast and larger helper text. There is no sound. Saves stay with this browser, profile and origin or extracted location. Clearing browsing data can erase them. There is no cloud save.

PLAN ANOTHER PICKING

Fruit, beans and starches

Pickings are the maximum rounds in this game, with care and enough season left. Later rounds need more growing days. Check the Field guide for each crop's starting method.

Fruit crops

Crop	First picking	Sun / day	Pickings
Tomatoes	65 days	8+ h	6
Cucumbers	55 days	8+ h	5
Zucchini	50 days	8+ h	6
Green bell peppers	75 days	8+ h	3
Eggplants	65 days	8+ h	4
Okra	55 days	8+ h	6
Acorn squash	100 days	8+ h	1
Muskmelons	65 days	8+ h	2

Beans & peas

Crop	First picking	Sun / day	Pickings
Bush beans	55 days	6+ h	3
Sugar snap peas	60 days	6+ h	3
Edamame	70 days	8+ h	1
Fresh lima beans	70 days	8+ h	2

Starchy crops

Crop	First picking	Sun / day	Pickings
Potatoes	95 days	6+ h	1
Sweet corn	75 days	8+ h	1
Sweet potatoes	95 days	8+ h	1

The pantry weighs the edible part. Its potato, sweet-potato, edamame and fresh lima-bean records use raw edible weights and tell you to cook before eating. Pods, skins, stems and other exclusions depend on the crop. Follow the Field guide; never eat green potatoes or potato berries.

Play Patch to Pantry and get the free ZIP

Explore the Truckfish Games catalogue

Real gardens: check seed packets and local extension advice. Identify edible plants and use garden tools with a knowledgeable adult. University extension and USDA food-composition source links are in the game's Field guide and the ZIP's Gardening-sources.md. Game content checked 19 November 2026.