

## Cookie policy

### Background

The EU Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive requires us to provide an accessible statement concerning our use of 'cookies' - small text items placed on your computer by web sites when you visit them. In cases where they are intrusive, the EU requires explicit agreement from users that their data may be stored. This regulation is intended to protect individuals from abuse during and after their site visit. Much of the EU's concern is about individuals 'being tracked' and having organisations learn about their personal habits and patterns. Such information can theoretically be used - for example - to target advertising; or to present specific items at your next visit. Such information has a potential market value.

### Introduction

In general, our web site and any other Garden Organic web sites to which it connects, aim to intrude as little as possible on your privacy. We do not track your personal data for advertising purposes; nor do we sell it; nor do we actively store detailed information about your browsing. Such data as are collected are generally held at the global level of, for example, which browsers and operating systems are used. It's through the analysis of such data that we discovered a significant proportion of users visit our site using a mobile phone or tablet, such as an iPad. This helped us tailor our site design to our actual user base. Hardly a bad thing for us to want to do.

### Persistence

Many sites - including this one - use standard PHP session cookies to maintain state. A web server natively deals anonymously with users requesting pages. Session cookies placed on your computer allow our server to recognise you as the person who asked for something five minutes ago. That's how links you've visited get to be coloured differently from those you haven't, for example, or how we know whether Javascript is to be used. All Garden Organic web sites use equivalent technologies to maintain state and to give you a sense of being in a 'conversation' while you visit. Such cookies typically expire when the session ends.

### Member Areas

Our member areas contain information for which members have - effectively - paid. They give us a subscription to access the 'closed' parts of our site. In this instance we use cookies placed on your computer to confirm that you are indeed a member, having passed the User Name and Password test at log-in. This saves you having to log in to each separate page every time you use it - one log-in per session allows you access the whole site for a reasonable time period. Such cookies typically expire when the session is closed.

### Financial transactions

When payments are made on-line, it is convention to use a secure session on a secure server (https:) in which transactions are encrypted - so even if someone 'eavesdropped' on them, they'd learn nothing at all. Our secure payment portal offers you exactly that sort of protection. Its own, separate cookie policy statement details the names of the cookies it stores and the period of time for which they are retained.

## **Government Digital Service (GDS)**

The Government Digital Service - in unpacking the EU Regulations - classifies cookies into three kinds according to their level of intrusiveness and provides examples of each kind:

### **Moderately intrusive**

- Embedded third-party content and social media-plugins
- Advertising campaign optimisation

### **Minimally intrusive**

- Web analytics / metrics

### **Exempt from changes to privacy regulations**

- Stop multiple form submissions
- Transaction specific

Source: Implementer Guide to Privacy & Electronic Communications Regulations (PECRs) for public sector websites [GDS, Spring 2012]

From their analysis you can see that cookie uses like ours are not the kind that are seen as giving cause for concern. For this reason, we consider it safe to assume that users of our web sites through visiting them implicitly accept our use of cookies as an important mechanism for provisioning them with a convenient and appropriate level of service.

## **Further information on cookie use**

### **What are cookies?**

A cookie is a small text file that is stored on your computer in its web browser. Cookies help you to navigate websites more effectively by remembering the settings and choices you make during your visits to a website. Cookies are essentially a user's identification card for using any website or service and make your interaction with them faster and more personal.

### **Types of cookies**

**'Session cookies'** are temporary cookies that are automatically erased when you close your web browser. They store information during your visit to a website and keep track of your movement from page to page so that you don't get asked for the same information you've already provided.

**'Persistent cookies'** help websites remember your settings and preferences to improve your user experience when you revisit the site in the future, for example by remembering your username at login. These cookies remain on your computer until they expire or you choose to manually erase them (see 'How to control cookies' below).

### **How we use cookies**

In general, this web site and any other Garden Organic web sites to which it connects, aim to intrude as little as possible on your privacy. We do not track your personal data for advertising purposes; nor do we sell it; nor do we actively store detailed information about your browsing. Such data as are collected are generally held at the global level of, for example, which browsers and operating systems are used, which helps us to tailor our site design to better suit our users.

We use cookies to perform useful functions such as remembering your username and enabling a positive experience during your visit to the site. We may also use tracking information to enhance the usability and performance of the site, for example by optimising the site to suit the devices or browsers that our users are accessing the site with.

We never use cookies to collect or share any personally identifiable information about you.

### **Cookie consent and how to control cookies?**

Under EU cookie law you have the right to control access by consent of any non-essential cookies used by this site. Please note that disabling cookies may result in some features and services on this site not functioning as designed or intended.

If you choose not to consent to any non-essential cookies, you must disable these cookies within your browser. For information on how to control cookies within a range of browsers, the Information Commissioners Office ([ico.org.uk](https://ico.org.uk)) have created a useful web page with a range of resources detailing [how to control and delete cookies](#) on your specific web browser.

To opt out of being tracked by Google Analytics across all websites visit

<https://tools.google.com/dlpage/gaoptout>

This cookie policy will be reviewed annually and updated whenever we make any changes to the cookies we set or our use of site cookies. We'll inform you of changes by asking you to review any updated policy document and remind you of your right to control access by consent to our cookie use.

### **What specific cookies are set on our website?**

The table below shows all of the cookies which have been installed by us to enable essential functionality and improve the user experience for our visitors. These are called 'first party cookies' because they are set by us, the table shows the name, expiry date and purpose of each cookie.

Cookie name	Expiry	Purpose
MoodleSession	When the user closes their browser or finishes their web session	You must allow this cookie in your browser to provide continuity and to remain logged in when browsing the site. This is a <i>session cookie</i> so when you log out or close the browser, this cookie is destroyed (in your browser and on the server).
_pk_ses.408.227a	24 Hrs from initiation	This session cookie stores information about your site visit over 24hrs so that if you return to the site within this timeframe the site will remember certain aspects of your previous visit for a better user experience and display any notifications to you only once for convenience.
_pk_id.408.227a	12 Months from initiation	This cookie is for convenience and remembers your username in the browser so that when you return to the site, the username field on the login page is already filled in for you. This is a <i>persistent cookie</i> and if you choose to decline it you will be required to retype your username each time you login.

**Third Party Cookies:** When you visit our websites there are some cookies set by web services we use to deliver our content and are not set by us, these are referred to as third party cookies. When you visit a page that contains embedded content, for example from YouTube, these websites may set cookies for a variety of purposes. We have no control over the setting of these cookies so advise you check the third-party websites for more information about their cookies and how to manage them.

We may use YouTube and Vimeo to embed video content onto this site. Both of these content providers may use cookies which are set on your computer only when you click on the embedded video player. We utilise the 'privacy enhanced mode' for each site which means they will not store any personally-identifiable cookie information for playbacks of embedded videos. To find out more please review the terms for each service:

[Vimeo cookie policy](#)

[Youtube embedded video information page](#)

Please see our site [privacy policy](#) for further information on information we collect and how to contact us if you have a query regarding your data.