

# Grow a Hideaway

**U**se fast-growing morning glories or pole beans to grow a teepee that can become a clubhouse for you and your friends or a secret hiding place where you can play or read a book.

## YOU WILL NEED:

- 6 to 8 bamboo poles 6 feet long
- sturdy twine or thin rope
- scissors
- gardening hand tools
- peat moss or seed-starting mixture
- 1 package morning glory seeds or pole bean seeds
- fertilizer (for beans)
- 1 package nasturtium seeds (optional; best with beans)

## PICK A PLANT

Morning glories—so named because their flowers open in the morning—will grow 8 to 12 feet tall and 6 feet wide. There are more than 1,000 varieties, or types, that come with heart-shape leaves and flowers in solid and striped colors such as blue, pink, white, and yellow. The most common is bright blue with a white center.

Pole, or vining, beans will grow 6 to 9 feet tall. They come in dozens of varieties and can have pods that are green, yellow, a speckled combination of both, or even purple (these plants have violet flowers and purple beans that turn green when cooked). Scarlet runner beans have bright red flowers. Be sure that your beans are “pole beans.” Bush beans are not vines and won’t climb the poles.

Nasturtiums produce brilliant red, white, yellow, and orange flowers that would add color to your teepee.

## MORNING GLORIES:

- attract hummingbirds and butterflies
- are related to sweet potatoes
- have a scientific name (*Ipomoea*) that comes from the Greek words *ips* (“worm”) and *homoios* (“like”) because of their worm-like stem—you can almost see them grow!
- have poisonous seeds
- symbolize love and affection in the language of flowers

## BEANS:

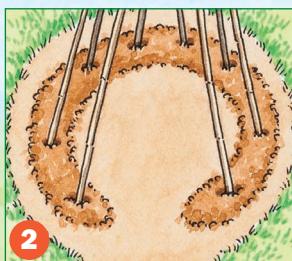
- are so high in protein that some people eat them instead of meat
- produce pods in 50 to 70 days, depending on the variety, making them one of the fastest-growing plants in the world
- grow more (and more!) new pods as mature pods are picked
- were used by ancient Greeks and Romans for voting: black to oppose, white to agree



Plan to plant only after all danger of a frost has passed.

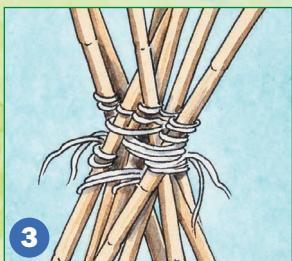
### FIND A LOCATION

Ask an adult for help in finding a good place for your teepee and building it. The spot must get lots of sunshine and have good soil.



### MAKE THE TEEPEE FRAME

**1** Mark a 4- to 5-foot-diameter circle on the ground. The height of your teepee will depend on how large you make the circle. Leave yourself enough space to move around inside.



**2** Mark a place for each pole about every 18 to 24 inches along the circle. Push each pole about 6 inches into the soil at a slight angle toward the middle. If the pole will not go into the ground, break up the soil or dig a small hole for each pole to get it deep enough.



**3** Gather the poles together at the top where they meet. Wind the twine or rope tightly around the poles several times and tie it so that they will stand steady. Check that your teepee frame is sturdy and won't fall over. If it is weak, push the poles deeper into the ground.



**4** Make a trellis for the plant vines to climb by tying twine around the teepee (leaving the entry open) and connecting it to the poles in four or five places each from top to bottom. The plants will climb the twine and make it shady inside.

### PREPARE TO PLANT

**5** Dig a small area around the outside base of each pole and loosen the soil.

**6** Add a little peat moss or seed-starting mixture to the hole and work it into the soil. (Seeds start growing, or germinate, better in light, not heavy, soil.)



### PLANT THE SEEDS

Soak the morning glory seeds in warm water overnight before you plant them. This will help the seed to break through its hard outer shell and germinate. Pole beans can be planted directly in the ground.



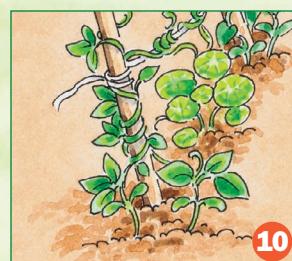
**7** Plant two or three seeds in the loose soil around each pole. Set the morning glories  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep and the pole beans 1 inch deep. Cover them lightly with soil and pat gently.



**8** In the soil between the poles, plant nasturtium seeds  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch deep, a couple of inches apart, and cover them with soil.



**9** Water the plants deeply once a week or more often in hot, dry weather. Fertilize the beans according to the directions on the package.



**10** As the plants grow and reach for the supports, gently guide them toward the poles and twine trellis.

Within a few weeks, your plants will be climbing the frame, brilliant flowers will be blooming, and your summer hideout will be complete.