

# Do's & Don'ts - A Guide To Successful AutoPot Growing

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - PLEASE KEEP THIS GUIDE SAFE IN CASE YOU NEED TO REFER TO IT DURING THE GROWING SEASON

## The 4Pot System Is Suitable For

All plant varieties, edible and ornamental, including: Cucumbers - Tomatoes - Melons - Chillies - Bell Peppers - Aubergines - Citrus plants - Root vegetables - Onions - Brassicas - Peas - Corn - Herbs - Strawberries - Flowers and much more.

## Potting Up Your 4Pot System

- Place Marix Discs in your pots as per your 4Pot Setup Guide
- Place a 25mm layer of horticultural grit, broken corks, or similar on top of the Marix Discs - this is your drainage layer
- Add your grow media of choice. Many types of grow media can be used including **peat free composts**.
- If your media is dense consider mixing in 30% Perlite or similar to aerate the rootzone, promote free-draining, and improve root growth.
- Avoid using soil or composts alone, such grow media can compact.
- Plant up, water through your pots, and allow them to drain for 10-15 mins. Once your trays are set up wipe the pots clean and place in trays.

## Positioning Your 4Pot System

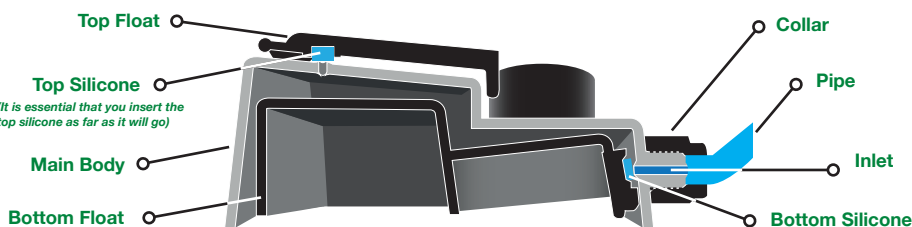
- Place your system up on a firm surface - ALWAYS ENSURE IT'S LEVEL
- Check your system is level during set up using a long spirit level
- The system relies on a firm, level surface to provide accurate watering - don't place your trays on gravel etc in case they sink/sag.

## The 4Pot System And The AQUAvalve

The AQUAvalve is the patented water control device at the heart of your 4Pot System. Once connected to your reservoir the AQUAvalve regulates the flow of water to your plants in the trays. The AQUAvalve is not a ballcock and will NOT continually maintain a level of water in your trays. The AQUAvalve floods the trays to a preset level, closes, and only reopens when the trays are drained (within 30-60mins).

## Setting The AQUAvalve - AQUAvalve Parts

- Top Float (Black) attached to the top of the Main Body
- Main Body (Grey) which features a Nozzle and Collar
- Bottom Float (Black) attached within the Main Body
- Collar (Black) which secures the pipe in place on the Nozzle
- Silicones (Blue) one on the Top Float, one on the Bottom Float
- Note that Silicones are Float specific:
  - Small Silicone = Top Float
  - Large Silicone = Bottom Float



Scan QR below for AQUAvalve Set Up And Care Video



## Setting The AQUAvalve - AQUAvalve Checklist

- Ensure that there is a blue Silicone in the Top Float
- Ensure that there is a blue Silicone in the Bottom Float
- Push the Silicones into their holes as far as they will go
- Hold the AQUAvalve side-on at eye level
- Ensure the Silicone in the Top Float is making a parallel seal on the volcano shaped hole below it

## AQUAvalve Servicing - Follow Steps In Order:

- Remove the Silicones (**see AQUAvalve Parts**) and store safely
- Clean the AQUAvalve Body and Floats using a toothbrush, green fabric scourer, or sponge and warm soapy water
- Push a pipe cleaner/wooden skewer through the AQUAvalve Nozzle
- Remove any fertiliser build-up in the Nozzle, rinse, and allow to dry
- Check that the holes for the Silicones are completely dry
- Place the Silicones in their specific holes and push in firmly

## When To Switch Your 4Pot System On

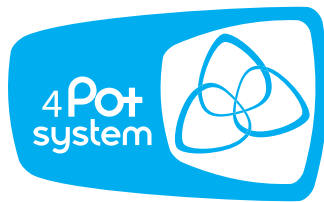
- You should not switch the 4Pot System on immediately
- Your plants need to establish BEFORE you activate the system
- Water added during setup will be enough to satisfy your plants initially
- Depending on weather conditions allow 10-14 days before 'switch on'
- DON'T PANIC! Your plants likely have more water than you think
- If you're worried pick up a pot and consider the weight
- Only if the pot is light should you consider switching on
- Your plants will grow stronger if you encourage the roots to seek water

## 'Pulsing' Your 4Pot System

After 10-14 days you can turn your system on permanently if you wish. Alternatively you can 'pulse' the system to further train and strengthen plant roots.

To pulse your 4Pot System:

- Every 3-4 days turn the reservoir on for 10 minutes and then off again
- Depending on weather conditions continue to do this for 2-4 weeks
- After 2-4 weeks switch your 4Pot System on permanently



## Using Fertiliser With The 4Pot System

The 4Pot System can both water and feed your plants. Feeding can be achieved by adding a liquid or soluble fertiliser to the reservoir. Water and fertiliser simply run to the pots in your trays via the pipework and the AQUAvalve.

AutoPot Liquid Plant Fertiliser is an excellent choice, it remains stable in suspension and flows cleanly. If your grow media includes fertiliser, supply plain water only for the first few weeks then add your fertiliser to the reservoir in accordance with manufacturers directions. If unsure of how long the feed in your grow media lasts add 5ml:litre to the volume of water in the reservoir.

Other liquid fertilisers can be used with the 4Pot System but may result in you having to clean the reservoir more often depending on their consistency and stability. If using powdered fertilisers dissolve in hot water first and then add to the reservoir.

## Keeping Your Fertiliser Flowing Cleanly

When refilling your reservoir and adding AutoPot Liquid Plant Fertiliser:

ALWAYS turn your reservoir tap off first. Then add your water and liquid fertiliser. Wait for 30 - 60 minutes. Turn your reservoir tap back on. Doing so prevents any agitated particles in the reservoir from being pulled through the pipework.

## Flushing The Pipework

It is recommended that you flush your pipework once a week, to do so:

- Ensure there is water in the reservoir

- Place your flush tap (at loose end of pipe) in a jug. Open the flush tap.
- Flush until the water runs clear with no particles. Close the flush tap.

## The Reservoir

Your 4Pot System is supplied with a 47L reservoir. In the early part of the season (when the plants are establishing and growing) the reservoir may last up to 3-6 weeks, depending on the weather conditions and the types of plants being grown. As the season progresses the maturing plants will begin to consume more water and liquid fertiliser. In the height of summer growing tomatoes with large amounts of fruit the reservoir will last between 7-14 days.

## Essential Maintenance - Reservoir

If you are using your 4Pot System continually throughout the growing season clean your reservoir and filter using the directions below before every third fill. If you are only using your 4Pot System while away on holiday, clean your reservoir and filter once finished.

### To Clean:

- Let your reservoir run low - ideally to just above the filter within
- Turn off the reservoir tap, disconnect and empty the reservoir
- Clean out the reservoir with plain water and a cloth, then rinse
- Disconnect the filter, open the filter case, remove the filter sponge
- Clean the filter using warm soapy water - rinse with plain water.
- Reassemble the filter, reattach to pipework, reconnect system

## Water Temperature

Ideally you should aim for a reservoir water temperature of 18-21°C.

During the summer or hot spells there are a few tricks you can use to help keep your temperature within this range.

- Place your reservoir in a shaded area
- Place a white cover over your reservoir
- Place a sealed 1-2L bottle of frozen water in the reservoir
- Use an AutoPot 'Reservoir Heat Shield' - this reflective jacket is specially designed for the 47L reservoir, it will help reflect heat away, keeping water temperature stable

## Extending your 4Pot

It's simple to extend the 4Pot System using 1Pot Extension Kits. Your 47L reservoir can supply up to a total of 6 plants (6x Extensions in total incl. your original 4). Beyond six plants increase reservoir capacity according to the size of your layout. AutoPot offer a full range of larger reservoirs, larger gauge pipework, and the right fittings to allow you to create layouts of virtually any size.



Scan QR to view  
4Pot  
accessories at the  
AutoPot Garden Site

## End Of Season

**ALWAYS** clean your complete system at the end of the growing season **NEVER** leave until the following season. Any sediment left in the pipework will dry over time and turn into sludge the following season when the system is set up and turned back on. Pipework should be flushed or can be soaked in warm water and vinegar overnight and then flushed with plain water. Pour hot water across your pipe and fittings to ease separation.

## General Tips & Further Information

If growing outdoors and not under cover, turn the reservoir tap off in the event of persistent rain.

Once the plants have consumed all excess rain water turn the reservoir tap back on.

If your plants are small and the surface of your grow media becomes too dry lightly dampen it with a watering can using a rose.

The extra moisture will help create the rising humidity that young plants crave. There is no need to routinely water through the tops of the pots.

If you find some plants are growing in shade simply swap pots around within your trays to ensure all are getting sufficient light. Always turn off the system first and let the plants drink the water and fertiliser in the trays before moving. Once empty re-position your plants and turn the system back on.

Keep an eye out for slugs in/around the trays. Remove if present. If persistent consider applying copper tape around the outside of the tray to deter them.

Check the 4Pot AQUAvalve compartment fortnightly for plant roots. Remove if present. This won't damage your plant.

For details of the AutoPot range scan the QR (right) and visit the AutoPot Garden website



To view video guides for AutoPot Watering Systems scan the QR (right)



To view or download this guide and others from the AutoPot website scan the QR code (right)



mail@autopot.co.uk | www.autopot.co.uk | +44 (0)1276 534900