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Which onion?

The Royal Horticultural Society keeps official growing guides for onions, shallots and salad onions. This sheet keeps them on their own lines.

Storage onions may be yellow, white or red. Autumn sets are usually sold as overwintering or Japanese onions, for an earlier crop. Shallots and salad onions have their own official pages.

The official crop	Official wording
Storage onions	Many varieties, "producing yellow, white or red onions, some spicy and tangy, others mild and sweet." Spring-planted or seed-raised bulbs are ready from July to October and can last until well into the following spring.
Overwintering or Japanese onions	Autumn sets, "usually sold as overwintering or Japanese onions, for an earlier crop." Ready in June and July; they store until early winter.
Shallots	Allium cepa Aggregatum Group, "a type of small, sweet onion." One set produces a cluster of new bulbs. They generally store for at least six to eight months. Encyclopaedia Britannica describes shallots as "a small, angular variety of onion." Both official wordings are kept.
Salad onions	Also called spring onions and scallions; varieties of Allium cepa or Allium fistulosum; sown little and often. Britannica keeps official sizes for spring onions and for green onions, also called scallions, as two entries.

A short quiz

1. When are autumn-planted overwintering sets ready to harvest, in the onion guide?
2. What does one shallot set produce, in the shallot guide?
3. Does the Society's salad-onion guide also use the names spring onions and scallions?

Answers. June and July. A cluster of new bulbs. Yes.

Wording from the Royal Horticultural Society onion, shallot and salad-onion growing guides, and Encyclopaedia Britannica, "onion," re-checked 18 November 2026. onions.vegetables.im is independent of both. Typographic sheet: no photographs inside.