



**GROWING**  
PLACES INDY



**How to Grow Common  
Vegetables and Herbs**

<b>Red and Yellow Cherry Tomatoes</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Red &amp; Yellow Slicing Tomatoes</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Cucumber</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Zucchini</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Eggplant</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Jalapeño</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Collard Greens</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Red Russian and Green Curly Kale</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Thyme</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Mint</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Garlic Chives</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Parsley</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Basil</b>	<b>15</b>

## Red and Yellow Cherry Tomatoes



### Plant Care

- As the cherry tomatoes begin to grow and produce fruit, Pull the cherry tomato plant's branches gently through the holes in the cage to support them.
- Watering:
  - The plants enjoy weekly, heavy watering over daily, light waterings. The plants should be watered when the top 2 to 3 inches of soil becomes dry.
  - Apply the water in the morning hours, directly into the top of the container to avoid wetting the foliage and water until the soil is evenly moist.
- Fertilizing:
  - Fertilize the cherry tomato plant every two to three weeks. Begin fertilizing 14 days after the tomato's planting date. Pour the fertilizer solution directly onto the soil in a ring around the tomato plant.
- If the plant's leaves are yellowing or curling at the edges, place a piece of shade cloth over the leaves during the hottest part of the day and remove it during evenings.

### Harvesting

- Plants typically begin flowering after a month, which is then followed by small, green fruits which eventually turn into cherry tomatoes.
- Ripe cherry tomatoes come off of their stems easily. Plants do best when the ripe fruits are picked daily.
- If the weather turns unseasonably cold, you can protect your plant by placing an old sheet over it.

## Red & Yellow Slicing Tomatoes



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Tomatoes require 1-2 inches of water per week. It's best to water the tomatoes less frequently but deeply, rather than daily but lightly. It's also best to water the plants early in the morning, before it gets too hot outside.
  - When watering, make sure the soil is evenly moist, but not soaking. If there is a particularly hot spell of weather, your plant may require additional water.
- Fertilizing:
  - Fertilize the tomato plants every 4-6 weeks throughout the growing season.
- Pruning:
  - Pinch and remove suckers that develop in the joint of two branches. They won't bear fruit and will take energy away from the rest of the plant.
  - After your tomato plants reach about 3 feet tall, remove the leaves from the bottom foot of the stem. This helps prevent fungal diseases from taking hold.

### Harvesting

- Leave your tomatoes on the vine as long as possible. If any fall off before they appear ripe, place them in a paper bag with the stem up and store them in a cool, dark place.
- Ripe tomatoes will be firm and red or yellow in color in color, maybe with some orange color remaining around the stem.



## Cucumber



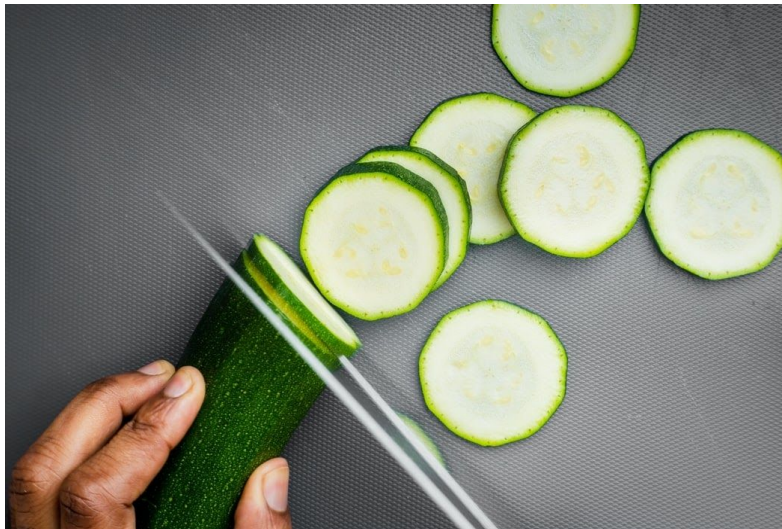
### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Watering is very important for growing cucumbers. They require at least one inch of water per week. Put your finger in the soil and when it is dry past the first joint of your finger, it is time to water.
  - Water slowly in the morning or early afternoon.
  - When seedlings emerge, begin to water frequently, and increase to a gallon per week after fruit forms.
- Fertilizing:
  - You can use liquid fertilizer to fertilize your plants. This kind can be purchased at a plant store.
  - Fertilizer should be applied when the cucumbers are first planted, one week after bloom, and every three week directly in the soil surrounding the plant.

### Harvesting

- During peak harvesting time, you should pick cucumbers every few days. If cucumbers are not picked regularly, the plants will stop producing.
- It's important not to let them get too big, otherwise they will be bitter. Slicing cucumbers should be harvested when they are about 6 - 8 inches long.
- Do not let the cucumbers become yellow. They are best picked when they are uniformly green and firm.
- To pick cucumbers, use a knife or clippers to cut the stem above the fruit.

## Zucchini



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Make sure that your zucchini plants get at least 2 inches of water a week. If you don't receive enough rainfall, supplement with manual watering.
  - Use a soaker hose or other method to water the plants below their leaves as watering using a sprinkler can cause the zucchini plants to develop mildew.
- Pruning:
  - You can begin pruning zucchini once the plants have begun to set fruit.
  - When pruning zucchini plant leaves, do not remove all the leaves. Keep some leaves on the stem, including leaf nodes near the last fruit you want to keep.
  - When cutting leaves to give zucchini more sun, just cut the bigger ones, and make the cuts close to the base of the plant, leaving all others.
  - You can also cut off any dead or brown leaves that may be present. Do not cut any stems, as this will increase the risk for disease.

### Harvesting

- Zucchini should be harvested when they have reached 6-8 inches in length. If you leave the zucchini for too long, the rind and seeds will become hard and it will be unpleasant to eat.
- Picking ripe zucchini often leads to a higher fruit production. If you want to slow down production, you can pick them less often.
- To pick the zucchini, use cutters to cut the fruit from the plant stem. Simply pulling the fruit off could damage the plant.
- Because the leaves of the plants are so large, they can sometimes hide ripe fruits. Make sure to check under the leaves for any fruits you might have missed.

## Eggplant



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Eggplants grow best when their soil is consistently moist. They require about an inch of rain on watering per week, but this may need to be increased slightly if temperatures are especially high.
  - Avoid overhead watering to prevent disease, but consider using mulch to keep soil moist, warm, and to keep weeds down.
- Fertilizing:
  - Apply a balanced fertilizer twice during the growing season.
- Eggplants grow best during very hot weather. Ideally, temperatures should reach 80 - 90 degrees during the day for best eggplant growth.

### Harvesting

- Eggplants are ready to harvest when their fruit is shiny, unwrinkled, and a uniform color. The skin should not rebound from a gentle pressure from a finger. Eggplants can also be harvested slightly before full maturity, which extends their shelf life slightly.
- If the eggplants go past maturity, they will not retain quality, so make sure the eggplants are picked when they become ripe.
- Eggplants don't keep well and are always best eaten fresh. You can store them for about a week in the refrigerator.



## Jalapeño



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Keep the soil constantly moist; peppers should be watered every other day or every third day. Peppers usually require about 1 inch of water per week.
  - Jalapeno peppers love water, but they should not be overly inundated with water. Peppers run the risk of rot if the soil is overly saturated.
- Fertilizing:
  - Peppers don't typically need fertilizer, although a good plant food product can be used for fertilization.
  - If the peppers are looking especially small, you can use fertilizer to increase size.
- Keep the garden well-weeded, so the weeds don't take water from your pepper plants.
- Mulch your pepper plants 3 weeks after putting them into the ground. Simply place some fresh compost around the base of the plant mounding it up toward the stem.

### Harvesting

- Peppers are usually ready for harvest in 3-4 months time.
- When peppers are done growing, they should be easy to remove from the plant.
- Ripe peppers are usually 4 - 6 inches long, fat, firm, and develop a bright sheen. They will turn a bright green, then begin to darken to a deeper green, then to black, and then to red. Jalapenos are ready to be picked when they are firm and bright green, but you can leave them on the plant all the way until they turn red.
  - Red jalapeno peppers are sweeter to the taste and not quite as hot, though they still retain their jalapeno heat and flavor. If you plan to dry your peppers, you should let them turn red.



## Collard Greens



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Collards grow best with an even supply of water. They should receive 1 - 1.5 inches of water per week.
  - Water regularly.
- Fertilizing:
  - Feeding your collards plant food once a week every week during the growing season can encourage strong, healthy plants.
  - Apply organic mulch such as compost, finely ground leaves, weed-free hay, or finely ground bark to keep the soil cool and moist and to keep down weeds. Mulching will also help keep the leaves clean.
- Collards like full sun, but they will tolerate partial shade as long as they get the equivalent of 4 to 5 hours of sun to bring out their full flavor.
- Plant in fertile soil because collards should grow fast to produce tender leaves.

### Harvesting

- Harvest leaves when they are up to 10 inches long, dark green, and still young. Old leaves may be tough or stringy.
- Pick the lower leaves first, working your way up the plant.
- Wash the leaves thoroughly before using them in collard greens recipes, because soil often clings to the undersides.
- Collard leaves will keep for several days in the refrigerator.

## Red Russian and Green Curly Kale



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - It's important to keep kale well watered and fed. Water 1 to 1.5 inches of water each week.
- Fertilizing:
  - When planting, add fertilizer (1-½ cups of 5-10-10 fertilizer per 25 feet of row into the top 3 to 4 inches of soil).
  - Regularly feed kale with a continuous-release plant food.
- Mulch the soil to keep down the weeds and keep kale cool as kale won't grow in hot weather.
  - Mulch the soil again heavily after the first hard freeze in the fall; the plants may continue to produce leaves throughout the winter.
- Kale does best in full sun but tolerates partial shade.

### Harvesting

- Kale is ready to harvest when the leaves are about the size of your hand. Pick about one fistful of leaves per harvest. Start harvesting the oldest leaves first from the lowest section of the plant.
- Avoid picking the terminal bud (found at the top center of the plant) because this will help to keep the plant productive.
- The small, tender leaves can be eaten uncooked and used in salads. Cut and cook the larger leaves like spinach, but be sure to remove the tough ribs before cooking.

## Thyme



### Plant Care

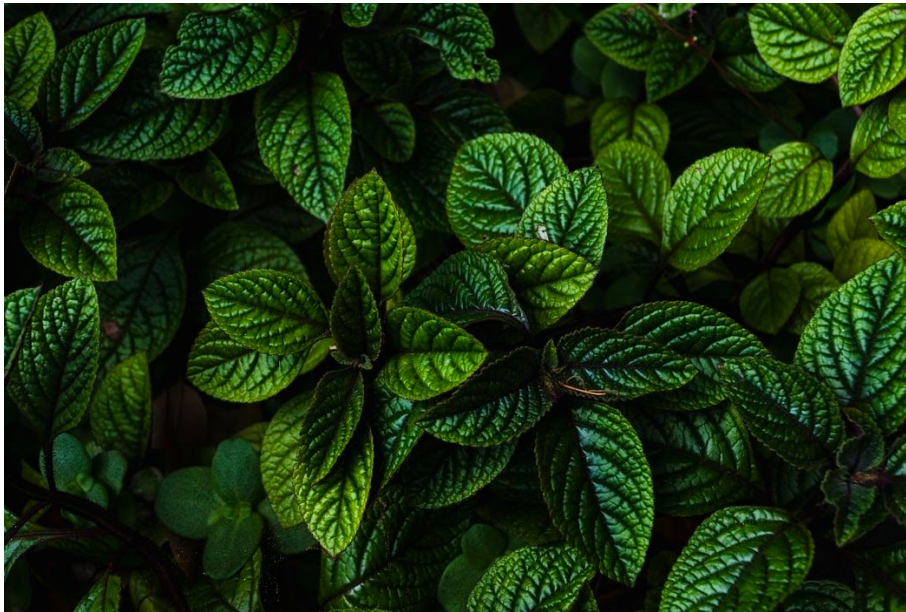
- Watering:
  - Water deeply only when the soil is completely dry. Thyme thrives in full sun and loves heat. Soil needs to drain well so there aren't "wet feet."
- Fertilizing:
  - In early spring, you may fertilize with organic matter, like compost, but not much soil amendment is necessary.
- Pruning:
  - Prune the plants back in the spring and summer to contain the growth.
  - Trim thyme whenever it gets leggy. If you keep trimming your thyme plant, it will keep growing (and also keep a compact shape). But always leave at least five inches of growth so the plant will continue to thrive.
- In the garden, plant thyme near cabbage or tomatoes.

### Harvesting

- Harvest thyme just before the plant flowers by cutting off the top five to six inches of growth. Leave the tough, woody parts.
- It's best to harvest thyme in morning after the dew has dried. Clean leaves should not be washed, because it removes some of the essential oils.
- To dry thyme, hang the sprigs in a dark, well-ventilated, warm area. You can also just dry the leaves by placing them on a tray. Once dried, store them in an airtight container. Crush just before using.



## Mint



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Water regularly to keep soil evenly moist, but minimal care is needed for mint.
  - Using a light mulch will help keep the plants moist and clean.
- Fertilizer:
  - You can place a light layer of compost or organic fertilizer on the plants every few months.
- Mint spreads easily to other areas of the garden, so it's important to provide physical barriers to keep the plant contained.
  - The roots of mint are very shallow, so the plant can easily be pulled up if needed.
  - Plant mint near cabbage and tomatoes in pots, if possible, in order to prevent it from spreading and stealing nutrients from your crops.
- Mint benefits from regular picking and pruning.

### Harvesting

- Frequent harvesting is the key to keeping mint plants at their best. Young leaves have more flavor than old ones, and mint can be harvested as soon as it comes up in spring.
- Right before flowering, cut the stems 1 inch from the ground. You can harvest one mint plant two or three times in one growing season. You can also pick individual leaves as needed.



## Garlic Chives



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Although chives are drought tolerant, it's important to give them consistent watering throughout the growing season for high yields.
  - Moisten the soil thoroughly when watering.
  - Chives' small bulbs grow near the soil surface, so use mulch to conserve moisture and keep the weeds down.
- Fertilizing:
  - For good production, top-dress with a nitrogen-heavy fertilizer in late spring or early summer if your soil is not already nutrient-rich.
- After the flowers bloom, be sure to remove them so that the seeds aren't spread throughout your garden.

### Harvesting

- Begin harvesting chive leaves about 30 days after you transplant or 60 days after seeding.
- Be sure to cut the leaves down to the base when harvesting (within 1 to 2 inches of the soil).
- Harvest 3 to 4 times during the first year. In subsequent years, cut plants back monthly.

## Parsley



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Although parsley grows its best in moist soil, it is relatively drought-tolerant.
  - Water evenly during the summer.
- Plant parsley next to tomatoes, corn, and asparagus. If you have roses in your garden, planting parsley nearby enhances the health and aroma of your roses.
- Parsley does well in both full-sun and part-sun environments.
- Plant parsley in moist, loamy, well-turned soil. Incorporate rich compost early in the growing season, just as you're planting your parsley.

### Harvesting

- The first year, harvest parsley for its leaves, choosing stalks furthest out from the plant's center. Leave the inner stalks and leaves, so the plant can keep growing.
  - In the fall of the second year, harvest the parsley's root. It is actually the most flavorful portion of the entire plant.
- Keep the stems; parsley's stems are more potent in flavor than its leaves. You can incorporate the stems for great texture and exceptional flavor in your foods.

## Basil



### Plant Care

- Watering:
  - Soil should be moist but well-drained. Basil plants like moisture.
  - If you live in a hot area, use mulch around the plants. During the dry periods in summer, water the plants freely.
- Pruning:
  - After the seedlings have produced their first six leaves, prune to above the second set. This encourages the plants to start branching, resulting in more leaves for harvest.
  - Every time a branch has six to eight leaves, repeat pruning the branches back to their first set of leaves.
  - After about 6 weeks, pinch off the center shoot to prevent early flowering. If flowers do grow, just cut them off.
- Basil will grow best in a location that gets 6 to 8 hours of full sun daily.
- Plant basil near tomatoes in the garden.

### Harvesting

- Start picking the leaves of basil as soon as the plants are 6 to 8 inches tall.
- Harvest in the early morning, when leaves are at their juiciest.
- Make sure to pick the leaves regularly to encourage growth throughout the summer.
- Even if you don't need the leaves, pick them to keep the plant going. Store them for later use by freezing them.