
Growing Herbs for Cooking

Growing your own herbs at home can be a simple and cost-effective way to improve the flavor of your meals. Use these tips to help you get started.

Making the Most of Your Space

- **Indoors** – Place herbs in a sunny east- or south-facing window or under a skylight. If this is not an option, consider placing under a grow light.
- **Small outdoor space** – Plant herbs along walkways or at the edge of your garden.
- **Patio or balcony** – Find ways to use vertical space. Hanging baskets and multi-level plant stands can help add more herbs per square foot. If you have a rail, attach long window boxes to your balcony.

Growing Herbs in Containers

Having outdoor space for gardening is great but many herbs grow well, and some grow better, when planted in containers. Consider the following:

- **Plant quality** – Use the heirloom variety of an herb, if possible. If you're not sure, try asking the staff at the nursery or gardening department.
- **Location** – Position indoor plant pots directly beneath a window for best sunlight. The pots can be moved around when seasons change and sunlight shifts.
- **Container type** – Choose plant pots with drains and saucers. If you only have a sealed pot, add rocks to the bottom and use potting soil for better drainage.
- **Soil source** – Get soil from a store rather than using dirt from outside. This helps to keep the plants safe from any diseases or pests that might be in the dirt.
- **Watering and fertilizing** – Plan to add fertilizer every three to six weeks. To check if a plant needs water, put your finger into the soil about two inches deep. If dry, it is time to water.
- **Harvesting** – Never harvest more than a third of the plant at a time, then wait for it to grow back before you harvest again.