

# URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

## How to: Get Enough Sunlight in the Garden

Since not every green thumb is blessed with an area that receives 6-plus hours of sunlight a day, gardeners are often asking how much sunlight their vegetables require to grow. Sun is one of the main components a vegetable needs to grow but it is possibly the one component gardeners have the least control over. Certain steps can be taken to ensure the vegetables in your garden are getting the amount of sun they need, and there are options for gardeners with the less-than-ideal amount of sunlight in their garden.

### Picking a location:

Many factors play into the amount of sunlight a plot gets per day, including nearby trees and fences and taller vegetables that may cast shade on other, shorter plants. You should choose the location with the most amount of sunlight when determining where to plant your garden. To determine this, once the weather begins to warm up in the spring, observe your yard throughout different times during the day and see where the sunlight is the strongest and for how long. If a tree is casting an unwanted amount of shade, it is possible to trim the lower branches or eliminate the tree all together to allow for a spot with plenty of sun.

Gardeners can plant two or more separate gardens to take full advantage of where the sunlight falls in their yard. If all or most of the yard is positioned under a shaded area, growing plants in containers placed on a sunny patio is an option. Although window boxes are usually used for flowering plants, they also can be used for vegetables if a



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gardener is struggling to find a spot receiving full sun in the garden.

### What vegetables to plant:

Fruit-bearing plants like eggplant, tomatoes, peppers and more require the most amount of sun. Leafy vegetables do the best in tolerating lower light conditions and root vegetables also can tolerate lower light. If you have tight, high-sun garden space, be sure to plant your fruit-bearing vegetables where they will receive the most sun and save the partial shaded areas for plants like carrots, radishes and lettuces. Lettuce, spinach, herbs and Asian greens only require 4-plus hours of sunlight a day whereas plants like asparagus, corn, cucumbers, garlic, melons, squashes and many more require 8-plus hours of sunlight a day. Just because a gardener's yard has more shade than others does not necessarily eliminate them from ever growing vegetables, it just may limit their options.



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## Benefits of partial shade:

Although having a yard without full sun can be restricting when it comes to which vegetables a gardener can plant, sometimes partially shaded areas have benefits, too – like not requiring as much watering. Another benefit would be some plants bolt in full sun, and partially shaded areas can delay this process. Leafy vegetables like spinach and lettuce will have a longer harvest period if not grown in full sun.

Urban Farmer carries a large variety of sun-loving and partial shade-tolerant vegetable seeds on our website at [ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)!



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