

# URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

## How to Grow Herbs Indoors

One of the best parts of having a green thumb is being able to offer fresh produce to family and add it into homemade meals. However, the majority of vegetables can only be grown during the warm parts of the year, and sometimes vegetables can prove to be more difficult to grow than originally planned. Growing indoor herbs is a year-round hobby that is easy and adds beauty to the home and the homemade dishes.

### What are the best herbs to grow indoors?

There are countless kinds of different herbs, all with different scents, tastes, appearances and difficulty levels. However, many kinds of herbs that are staples in culinary dishes also are easy to grow. Some easy to grow herbs include:

**Basil:** This may be the most popular herb amongst gardeners because of its delicious taste and beautiful aroma. If growing basil inside, opt for the smaller varieties. Depending on where you live, larger plants can create space problems.

**Parsley:** This herb is beautiful, fragrant and can be used to add taste, aroma and beauty to a culinary dish. Parsley grows easily indoors, but if starting from seed, soak the seed in warm water overnight to the coating before you plant it.

**Chives:** These herbs offer a punch of flavor and can be used in almost any dish. They also serve as a pretty garnish. Chives will grow just about anywhere, and you should never harvest more than one-third of



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the plant at one time. Harvest by snipping the chives off at the base.

**Lemon balm:** This herb is often underutilized, and it is easy to begin indoors. When growing lemon balm, only grow the plants for one year as the flavor profile will start to deteriorate after the first year of growth. Plant lemon balm seeds indoors in the fall, grow and use the herbs throughout the winter, and once spring arrives, transfer the plant outdoors.

**Cilantro:** This is an ideal herb to grow inside because by nature, it doesn't live long. If growing inside, utilize succession planting and plant more seeds two weeks after the first batch so you have a constant supply.

**Thyme:** This herb is a good option to grow indoors because it grows well from cuttings. If you have a thyme plant growing outdoors, simply divide the larger plant and begin your smaller plant inside.



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## How to start herbs from seed:

Depending on which herbs you decide to plant, some do better from seed and others do better when started as seedlings. Usually, perennial herbs like thyme and rosemary do best when you purchase them as young plants or take cuttings or divide older plants. Other herbs like basil and cilantro do well when planted from seed.

When planting from seed, plant the seeds in a seed-starter soil mix. Plant the seeds in small plastic trays with cells, as this makes it easier to start multiple different kinds of herbs from seed at once. After planting, place the tray in a warm room but out of direct light. Cover the cells with plastic to keep the soil moist, but once the seeds germinate, remove the plastic and move the tray to direct light.

If you plan to grow your herbs naturally without artificial lighting, the best place to put them is on a windowsill where the window is south-facing. This will allow for the most sun exposure during the day. However, some herbs do better in less light. Place your tropical-climate herbs in the south-facing window such as basil, rosemary and thyme. Other herbs like chives will do fine in an east- or west-facing window where the light isn't as direct and the location will be cooler.

If you don't mind artificial light, set up grow lights to provide more light to the herbs. Set the grow lights a few inches away from the herbs and have them set to 14 hours a day.



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## Caring for indoor herbs:

When it comes to caring for your indoor herbs, take care to not overwater. When watering, ensure the soil isn't constantly moist. The herbs should be planted in a mix of soil that creates a loose, fast-draining environment for the herbs. A mix of cactus soil and potting soil works well. Allow for the soil to become completely dry between watering, otherwise over-watering may kill the herbs.

If you want to give your herbs a little extra quick, you can fertilize them up to twice a month with a regular houseplant fertilizer.

When it comes to harvesting time, don't be afraid to cut the herbs. Many of them grow back quickly and benefit from frequent pruning. If you are growing an herb for its leaves, such as basil or mint, pick the leaves from the stem before the herb flowers.



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The best time of day to pick herbs is early in the morning, which is when their fragrance will be the strongest. If you are growing a flowering herb indoors, such as lavender, pick it before the flowers are fully open.

Urban Farmer sells herb kits that have everything you need to grow a custom herb garden at any time of the year. Check out our herb kit selection on our website at [ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)!



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