

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing radishes

Radishes are the perfect vegetable for new gardeners, as the roots are ready to harvest in as little as 21 days. Radishes can be eaten raw or added to salads for an extra crunch with a bit of flavor. Although oftentimes the tops are composted, radish greens also can be eaten by sautéing them in a pan or adding raw greens with the radishes to a salad.

To plant:

Radishes do best when sown directly into the garden, as they are a cool-weather crop and can be grown in the spring and fall. As soon as the soil can be worked, plant the radish seeds in a spot in the garden that receives full sun. This is usually about four to six weeks before the last frost date. Prior to planting, till the soil 8 inches deep as radishes grow below ground. Remove any rocks or debris in the radish bed as this can inhibit growth.

Once the area has been tilled and cleared, plant the seeds $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep and 3 inches apart in furrows. Cover loosely with soil. Continue to plant radish seeds every two weeks while the weather is cool for a continuous harvest. Add a floating row cover to prevent maggots and flea beetles from attacking the seedlings.

To grow:

Radishes grow best in soil with a pH of 5.8 to 6.8. When radishes are 2 inches in height, thin them to 3 inches apart. Only grow radishes in the spring and fall because if grown in warmer months they will bolt, creating a bitter flavor with a woody texture



Easter Egg Radish seeds available at ufseeds.com

in the roots. Radishes grown in cooler temperatures have a milder flavor. If warmer weather is a danger to a gardener's radishes, mulching and consistent watering can delay the effects of bolting. When planted near cucumbers, peppers and squash, radishes can draw aphids away from the other plants.

To harvest:

Radishes are ready to harvest when the leaves are 4 inches tall. Red radishes are ready to harvest when the roots are approximately 1 inch in diameter. White radishes are ready to harvest when the roots are $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter. To harvest, pull the entire plant straight up from the soil.

What radishes crave:

Since radishes grow so fast, they don't need fertilized during their growth but can benefit from soil that is fertilized prior to planting the seeds. Before planting, spread a 2-inch layer of compost over the furrows where the



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radish seeds will grow. Sprinkle 1/2 pound of 16-20-0 fertilizer per 50 square feet of radishes. Mix the compost-fertilizer blend into the top 6 inches of soil. Avoid fertilizers high in nitrogen. Instead of fertilizing after planting the radishes, spread mulch enriched with wood ash around the plants.

Where to buy radish seeds:

Urban Farmer sells many kinds of radishes with colors ranging from the traditional red to a unique watermelon variety. Check out radish seeds on our website at ufseeds.com!



Watermelon Radish seeds available at ufseeds.com