



Growing Plants From Seed For Your Garden: How to germinate, water, fertilize and plant seedlings.

What is germination?

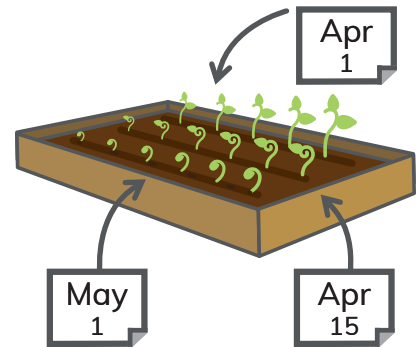
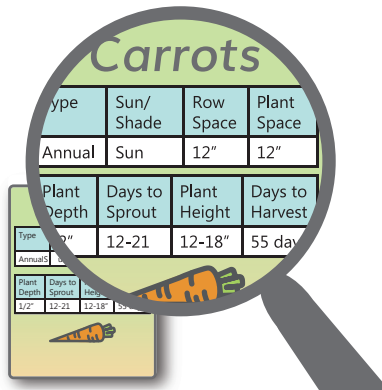
After a period of dormancy, if placed in the right conditions, a seed will begin to germinate. Germination is how a seed begins to grow, develop roots and leaves and become a plant.

What you will need.



Top tip! When deciding which seeds to start, keep your garden conditions, skill level and preferences in mind.

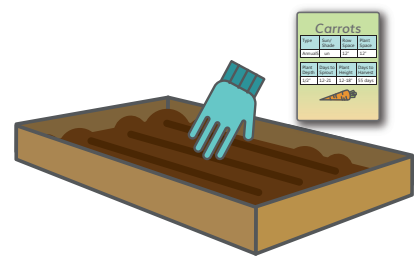
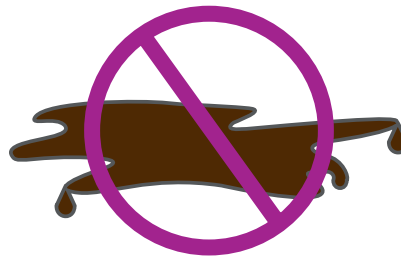
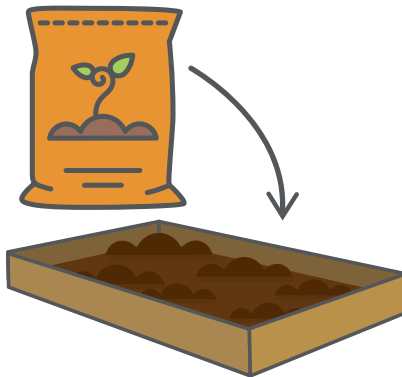
How to start seeds indoors.



1. Pick seeds that suit the conditions in your garden.

2. Review the packaging for information about ideal growing conditions, number of days to sprout, and days to bloom/harvest.

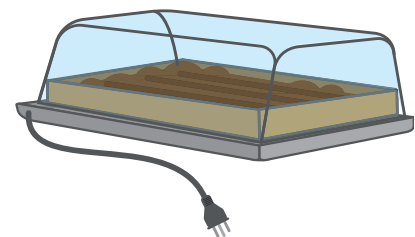
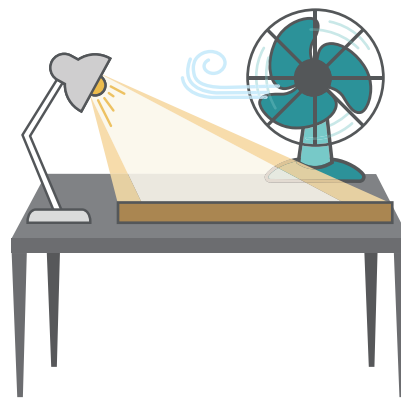
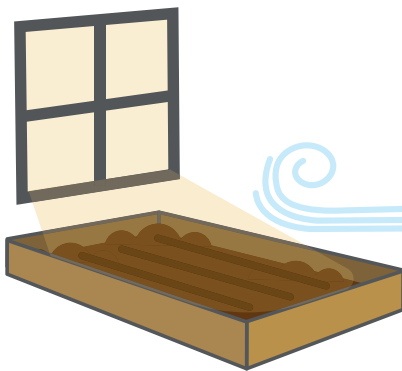
Tip! Review the suggested days to transplant and/or harvest, then consider staggering seed starting (to ensure you have flowers/vegetables all summer).



3. Select a flat shallow tray or box. Fill it almost to the top with a growing medium designed for starting seeds.

4. Moisten the soil until it clumps and holds its shape when you squeeze it. Don't water too much or it will become mud.

5. Loosen the soil and gently place the seeds, following the package directions for depth and spacing.



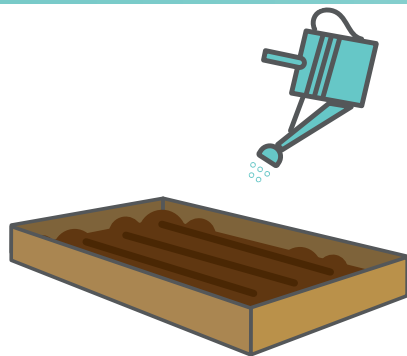
6. Place the tray in a location with bright indirect light and good air circulation.

Tip! You can improve growing conditions with grow lights and an air circulating fan.

Optional: Using a heat mat or humidity dome* can help seeds germinate faster.

*Stop using the dome once the seeds sprout.

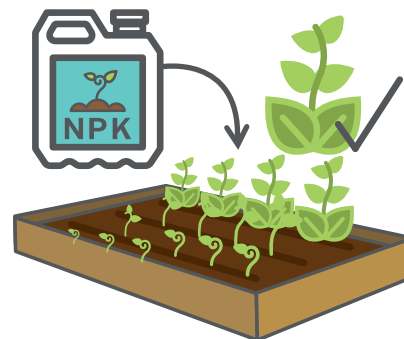
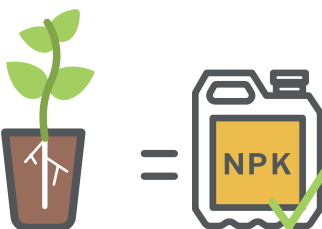
How to water and fertilize seedlings.



1. Water gently with a watering can or spray bottle. Be careful as to not dislodge the seeds. Keep the soil consistently moist until the seedlings have established (plenty of roots, almost root bound).



2. The seedling will sprout with “seed leaves.” Begin fertilizing when you see the next set of leaves, known as “true leaves.”

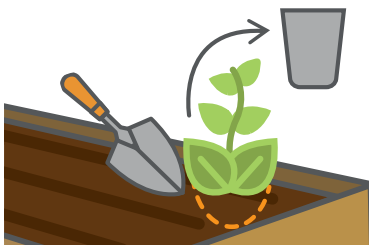


3. Fertilize with a general purpose fertilizer (diluted to 1/4 recommended strength) or a seedling fertilizer. Water and fertilize as needed until the seedlings are ready to be transplanted.

How to plant seedlings.



1. When the seedlings have two or three sets of leaves, it is time to transplant them into individual pots.



2. Gently dig up a seedling and the surrounding soil, careful not to damage the new roots. Then transplant into a nursery pot suitable for the size of the root system.



3. Continue to care for these plants indoors until after the last frost; then transplant into your garden.

Favourite plants to grow from seeds.

Vegetables

Beans, carrots, peas, raddish, tomatoes, zucchini.

Flowers

Delphinium, marigolds, petunia, sunflowers, sweet pea.