

INDOOR GARDENING

FOR ULTIMATE **SURVIVAL:**

16 *Best Plants* To Grow In Your Home For Optimal Health & Well-Being



ALTERNATIVE
DAILY

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16 *Best Plants* *To Grow In Your Home For Optimal* **Health & Well-Being**



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BEST EDIBLE PLANTS TO GROW INSIDE

You don't have to be a gardening mastermind to grow your own edible plants — and you don't even have to have space outside for a garden! In fact, there are lots of great edible plants that can be grown indoors, even in a tiny apartment space. Just imagine, all you have to do is wake up in the morning and take a few steps to tend your crops. There are lots of fruits, vegetables and herbs that can thrive in the smallest of urban spaces, no yard required.





What You Need

To start your garden inside, you need to consider the same elements that you'd think about when growing outdoors: sun, soil and water. We'll start with sunlight since that can be the most challenging. Every plant has specific needs when it comes to sun. If it requires full sun, you'll need to place the plant in a spot like a windowsill where it will get direct sun for six hours a day. Partial sun means that it needs a few hours of sunlight, in the morning or afternoon. Plants that need full shade are the easiest to maintain indoors as they can be placed just about anywhere other than a room that's dark all day.

Soil is easy. Just head to your local nursery, garden or home store and purchase potting soil. I always look for potting soil that's safe for organic gardening with high-quality ingredients, and of course, no chemicals. Good soil offers a balanced level of vitamins and nutrients that seeds need to thrive, grow large and taste delicious. While water preferences can vary from plant to plant, for plants that are deep-potted, use a water can that provides a "rain shower." For smaller pots or crops, a spray bottle generally works just fine for providing the moisture plants need.

Now let's get started on the fun part — what to plant!



AVOCADOS

Nutrition:

Avocados are filled with healthy fats and they are high in vitamin A in the form of carotenoids, which are known to lower the risk of heart disease, cancer and vision problems. They also contain lots of vitamin E and vitamin B6.

Growing:

You can actually grow new avocados from a used avocado, but it can be challenging and doesn't always produce edible fruit. For a greater chance of success, buy a dwarf avocado plant. Place some sand at the bottom of a large, well-draining pot and then plant your tree. Water it regularly but don't let it become waterlogged. As dwarf trees can grow to be very tall, higher than ten feet, it's best to grow it in a room with high ceilings.



Harvesting:

If you have the green variety, the fruit will be ready for harvest when the skin turns slightly yellow. Darker varieties are ready when the skins turn almost black. Don't let ripe fruit stay on the tree for longer than a few weeks or they'll begin to lose their texture and flavor.





BASIL

Nutrition:

Basil is popular for culinary use, frequently used to flavor meats, stews and sauces, and it also offers lots of medicinal benefits thanks to its analgesic, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.



Growing:

Basil can be grown indoors by planting seeds or a starter in one of the smaller, globe-type containers. Avoid the larger types, otherwise you'll end up with space issues. It should be at least four inches wide, however, and contain good drainage holes too. These plants need lots of sun and warm temperatures and should have their soil fertilized once a month. They also need plenty of water; water every other day, or if it's very hot, once a day. Check the soil, if it's dry, it needs water. Start to prune when the top leaves of the plant reach about six inches in height. Continue to prune as it gets bushier, pinching off any flowers that appear.

Harvesting:

To harvest, gently snip a few leaves off, being careful not to remove all leaves from any one plant.





CARROTS

Nutrition:

Carrots are famous for their ability to protect eye health as they're rich in beta-carotene. This has been shown to help reduce the risk of developing macular degeneration and cataracts. Carrots also contain many vitamins and minerals, including folate, potassium, manganese, niacin, thiamin, and vitamins A, B6, C and K.



Growing:

Like most root vegetables, carrots make a great addition to a window box, though it needs to be at least 18 inches deep and wide, with drainage holes at the bottom. Fill your container to within an inch of the top, using a potting mix that contains lots of humus. Water the soil before planting seeds an inch apart in rows that are six inches apart from each other. Press the seeds in gently, then cover with a thin layer of soil. They need to be in an area that gets lots of sun, like your windowsill, and they require moist but not soaked soil. You may want to soak some peat moss in water overnight and then spread that on top of the seeds to preserve moisture.

Harvesting:

When your carrots have grown to above $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch across the top, just below the stem, they're ready for harvest. If you don't see the actual carrot, you can brush some of the soil around the stem. Don't wait too long, as the bigger they get, the more they start to lose their flavor. Pick them by grabbing firmly at the root and wiggling them around before pulling straight up. If your soil is too hard, water it and then wait for an hour before trying again.





CHIVES

Nutrition:

Chives contain a good amount of vitamin K and are especially rich in vitamin A, with 145 percent of the daily recommended value in a half-cup. They also contain carotenes, the flavonoids that help protect you from mouth and lung cancers, and offer anti-inflammatory, antibiotic, antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, and antimicrobial properties too.

Growing:

Select a pot that's six to eight inches in diameter. Fill it nearly all the way to the top with organic potting soil. Plant your seeds and cover them with a light layer of soil. Place the container in a spot that gets partial shade and then water it regularly, checking the soil often to make sure it never dries out.

Harvesting:

Simply snip the leaves gently from each plant. Don't remove all the leaves from any one plant.



CILANTRO

Nutrition:

Cilantro is rich in phytonutrients, flavonoids and phenolic compounds. It's also a good source of dietary fiber, vitamins A, C, E, K, calcium, iron, potassium and magnesium.



Growing:

Select a container that's at least eight inches deep and contains holes at the bottom for drainage. Fill it with soil up to an inch or two from the top. Press your cilantro seeds into the soil and then water until the soil is moist. Cover the container with plastic wrap and secure it with rubber bands. Once the seeds have germinated and start to push against the plastic, usually in just a few days, remove the plastic wrap. Water the plant every day, keeping the container in a place that gets lots of sun.

Harvesting:

Snip a few leaves from each plant, being careful not to remove all leaves from any one plant.





GARLIC GREENS

Nutrition:

Garlic is one of the healthiest things you can consume. It's a superfood that contains cancer-fighting properties. It has also been associated with a lowered risk of heart disease, reduced high blood pressure and lowered cholesterol.



Growing:

As growing garlic bulbs indoors can be challenging, garlic greens are much easier and can be used just like you would scallions. Purchase a few garlic bulbs with small cloves and use a four-inch pot with drainage holes at the bottom. Fill the pot with potting soil to about a half-inch below the top. Break the bulbs into individual cloves, leaving the peel on, and then push each one about an inch into the soil, with the pointy end up, planting 12 cloves close together. Place the pot in a sunny area and water well. Keep the soil moist but not soggy. You should start to see green shoots in a week or so.

Harvesting:

When the shoots have reached eight to ten inches tall, clip what you need using scissors. When the cloves start putting out more sprouts, compost the contents of your pot and fill it up again with new potting soil. Plant new cloves and know that each one only sprouts good greens once, so you'll have to continuously re-plant.





GINGER

Nutrition:

Ginger is not only famous for its spicy flavor, it's well-known for its ability to calm motion sickness, nausea and other stomach upset. It also helps to reduce inflammation which may help alleviate arthritis symptoms.



Growing:

Growing ginger is easy! All you have to do is buy a chunk of ginger and cover it with soil in a container with the freshest buds facing up. Put the container in a spot that gets indirect sunlight. Keep the soil consistently moist, never letting it become dried out or waterlogged.

Harvesting:

Pull the whole ginger plant from the soil, cut off what you need and then replant it using the same growing process over again.





LEMONS

Nutrition:

Who doesn't love lemons? They not only add great flavor, they're loaded with vitamin C and antioxidants that help to reduce the risk of heart disease, lower inflammation and more.



Growing:

If you don't want to wait a long time, start with a two or three-year-old dwarf tree. Choose a plastic, ceramic or clay pot that has several holes at the bottom and is slightly bigger than the root ball of the tree. Use potting soil that was formulated for citrus trees. Place your plant in an area that gets lots of sunlight (eight to 12 hours each day) and maintains a temperature between 55 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Water it regularly, making sure that you don't oversaturate the soil. Mist the leaves with a spray bottle regularly to keep them perky.

Harvesting:

It usually takes six to nine months for lemons to ripen. You can test them by checking for full color and gently squeezing the rind. If there's a slight "give," they should be ready for harvest and eating.





MANDARIN ORANGES

Nutrition:

Mandarin oranges are sweet, juicy and are a good source of fiber, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium and antioxidants.



Growing:

For the best chance of success, buy dwarf mandarin orange trees. They do best in large pots with drainage at the bottom, along with rich soil. Place them in a sunny location, rotating regularly to be sure they receive about the same amount of light on all sides. Water regularly, letting the soil dry out just slightly in between. If you notice the roots growing out of the drainage holes, you'll need to re-pot in a larger container.

Harvesting:

Harvest mandarin oranges as soon as they turn orange — if you wait, they'll lose their flavor. Clip or carefully twist and pull each fruit, ensuring the “button” at the top stays put.





MICROGREENS

Nutrition:

Microgreens are high in nutrients. They are a great source of folate, as well as vitamins A, C and K.



Growing:

Purchase a variety of seeds such as Swiss chard, kale and radishes. Fill a tray that's no more than two inches deep with potting soil, then moisten the soil with water. It should be damp, but not wet. Sprinkle your seeds evenly over the soil and then sift a thin layer of the soil over the top to cover them up. Lightly mist the soil using a spray bottle and then place the tray in a windowsill that gets lots of sun, in a room that remains between 60 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Mist or lightly water the soil every day, keeping it moist but not waterlogged. When the seeds germinate, they'll need 12 to 14 hours of light each day.

Harvesting:

When the seedlings reach one to two inches in height and have about two sets of leaves, they're ready for harvesting and eating. Hold them at the stem, cutting the leaves with scissors. Be sure not to cut into the roots.





MINT

Nutrition:

Mint is not only tasty, it offers many medicinal benefits thanks to its menthol content. This acts as a decongestant for breaking up mucus, while providing a cooling effect that can relieve a sore throat. It can also aid digestion and even help soothe a hangover.



Growing:

Purchase seeds or starter plants and use a large, deep pot that's about ten inches in diameter. Fill the container with potting soil and then plant your starter or seeds. Place it in a spot that gets lots of sun, watering regularly to ensure the soil doesn't dry out.

Harvesting:

Use your scissors to gently snip a few leaves from each plant, being careful not to remove all leaves from any one plant.





MUSHROOMS

Nutrition:

Mushrooms are a great addition to many dishes. They are also a rich source of vitamin C, antioxidants and fiber.

Growing:

To grow mushrooms indoors, it's best to purchase a mushroom-growing kit. You can also grow them in a laundry basket using the [instructions here](#).





ROSEMARY

Nutrition:

Rosemary contains an antioxidant known as carnosic acid which is known to help prevent weight gain and improve cholesterol.



Growing:

Plant seeds in a container that has holes in the bottom for drainage. Add soil that is a mix of two parts potting soil to one part coarse sand. Add a teaspoon of agricultural lime for every five inches of pot. Place the container in a sunny spot that gets at least six hours of direct sunlight each day. Water only when the soil is dry to the touch, being careful never to let it dry completely.

Harvesting:

Carefully snip a few leaves from each plant, making sure you don't remove all leaves from any one plant.





SALAD GREENS

Nutrition:

Like microgreens, salad greens like spinach, romaine and arugula offer lots in the way of nutrition. They are filled with vitamins A, C and K in addition to offering iron and folate.



Growing:

Use seeds or starter plants and a planter box with drainage holes in the bottom. Fill the box with potting soil, using your finger to poke holes into the soil about four inches apart. Sprinkle a few seeds into each hole and then pat the soil back over the hole, covering them up. If you use starter plants, massage the roots first and then place each one in a hole, filling in soil around each one. Water the soil, and then when the plants begin to grow, keep only the largest, healthiest shoots and pull out the rest. Water the soil regularly, always keeping it moist to the touch.

Harvesting:

Pull off only the outer leaves to allow the plants to keep growing, making sure you don't disturb the roots.





SCALLIONS

Nutrition:

Scallions are in the same Allium family as garlic. These immune-boosters have also been linked to cancer prevention.



Growing:

You don't need any seeds for scallions, only a bunch of scallions. Wrap their bulbs together using a rubber band, then place them in a glass with an inch of water. Change out the water every day. When new green shoots appear and the roots have doubled in length, plant them in a shallow pot. Keep them evenly watered, not letting the soil get too damp in-between waterings. Make sure to keep them in full sun.

Harvesting:

Snip the green tops as needed, leaving at least an inch or two of the plant. If you want to use the white part, harvest them when your plants are six inches tall by pulling the white clump from the soil.





TOMATOES

Nutrition:

Tomatoes are incredibly healthy, partially thanks to their lycopene content which offers anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.



Growing:

Use a six-inch pot for one plant or a pot that's 12 inches for two plants. Fill the container with starter potting mix and plant your seeds about a 1/4 inch deep. Keep the soil moist but not soggy, and put your container in a place that gets lots of sun. You'll need to turn it occasionally, making sure all sides are exposed to the sun. When the seedlings have grown to about three inches tall, transplant them from the starter mix to potting soil. About two weeks after transplanting, add an organic fertilizer and then water thoroughly, keeping the soil moist but not overly damp.

Harvesting:

When the fruits are red, firm, and have a slight "give" when touched, they are ready to harvest. You can gently twist or clip to pull the fruits from their stems.





NO YARD SPACE? NO PROBLEM.

From carrots to chives, purslane to plantains, all you need to create a thriving indoor garden is soil, water, light... and a bit of creativity! Pretty soon you'll be able to walk from your kitchen to your garden in just a few easy steps, not to mention enjoy improved indoor air quality from the lush garden in your humble abode.

Enjoy!

