

Growing Food Indoors



We will start with the simple foods of lettuce varieties, spinach, carrots and sprouts. Lettuce varieties and Spinach are relatively easy and quick growers for indoor gardening. Having your own salad fixings in your home without going out to the store is a real treat and with better flavor and nutrition too!

Having indoor plants in the winter will help to clean the air in your house, so consider enjoying your food and flowers for more than food and visual pleasure...

Lettuce varieties and spinach:

Germination does not require light, only gentle moisture in the morning and afternoon (not evening). These are cold weather crops, so they *do not* require temperatures over 65° and do not like temperatures above 72° or below 40°.

1. ***Planting container***, as a window box, repurposed for indoor planting,
2. Fill with moistened potting soil.
3. With your finger or trowel, poke shallow holes in the soil for the seeds.
4. Sprinkle some seeds on the palm of your hand and

5. Pinch a bit of seed into each space.
6. **Mist** the soil twice a day to keep moist until germination
7. If too many plants are growing in the same space, thin the sprouts and eat them; they are sprouts!
8. As the sprouts develop established roots and foliage, water **each morning** as they grow, leave the water out the night before to release the chlorine from the water. Also, add a drop of lemon scented dishwashing liquid to the watering can to keep the soil in the containers loose.
9. Turn the containers from time to time to help the plants to get “exercise” and prevent them from leaning only one way towards the light.
10. Harvest the **outer** leaves as they mature
11. Leave the center core to keep producing more foliage
12. As the plants mature, and are being harvested, add some compost, or organic fertilizer to the surface of the soil for added nutrition for the plants
13. Keep harvesting until the plant gets tuff, or milky sap forms as the stem or leaf is broken; usually three months, or more.

Carrots:

Germination does not require light, only gentle moisture in the morning and afternoon (not evening). Carrots are warmer weather crops, but still do well at 65°, or above. Consider doing one container each week to have a good continuous crop for the winter.

1. **A deep planting container**, at least one foot deep, repurposed for indoor planting,
2. Fill with moistened cactus potting soil, or potting soil with sand mixed into it.
3. With your finger or trowel, poke shallow holes in the soil for the seeds.
4. Sprinkle some seeds on the palm of your hand and
5. Pinch a seed or two into each space.
6. **Mist** the soil twice a day to keep moist until germination
7. **Have patience**, carrots take a long time to germinate.
8. If too many plants are growing in the same space, thin the sprouts and eat them; they are sprouts!
9. Once they sprout, water **each morning** as they are growing, leave the water out the night before to release the chlorine from the water. Also, add a drop of lemon scented dishwashing liquid to the watering can to keep the soil in the containers loose.
10. Turn the containers from time to time to help the plants to get “exercise” and prevent them from leaning only one way towards the light.
11. The “Crown” will form at the base of the foliage

12. When the crown starts to rise and looks full, you can pull a sample carrot up to test them.
13. Keep watering them each morning
14. Add some compost to the surface of the soil, or add *organic* fertilizer to your watering can for added nutrition for the plants for better growth.

Bugs:

If aphids or spider mites find your indoor plants, consider my “**Basic Bug Spray**”:

1. To a one-quart *mister* bottle
2. Fill with water
3. Add a squirt (1/4 cup) of lemon scented dish liquid
4. (Preferably NOT antibacterial)
5. Spray in the mornings for a week
6. Once a week after that to keep plants healthy

Sprouts:

Any seeds, for edible plants, can be germinated to become sprouts in as few as four to six days. Sprouts are “quick” and easy to grow, have an abundance of nutrition on a small plant and safer than what is purchased in the store.

Sprouts purchased in a store tend to be treated with chemicals to reduce their spoilage, may build up harmful bacteria while waiting to be sold and lose much of their nutritional value through the duration of the transportation and storage process.

1. It is best to start with a one quart sprouting jar with a screen lid, or enough holes punched in the lid to allow air and moisture to circulate to prevent mildew and bacteria.
2. Wash the jar and lid well before starting the process
3. Use untreated, non-genetically engineered, seeds, legumes and grains.
4. Remove any split, or damaged seeds
5. Place two tablespoons of seeds, or 1/2 cup of legumes or grains in the jar
6. Cover with three times as much water as seeds
7. Swish around the seeds and water to moisten evenly
8. Let sit 5 hours, or overnight to soak for a quick start
9. Drain the water from the jar and rinse seeds in fresh lukewarm water
10. Lay at an angle for drainage and air flow, in a shady space, as germination does not need light.
11. Rinse the seeds and sprouts twice a day to prevent bacteria from developing and to freshen the seeds and sprouts

12. When turning the sprouts, be careful to move them gently to avoid breaking the tender shoots that would kill the sprouts.
13. Once the sprouts form, place the jar on its side in a sunny window to help the foliage develop.
14. Start harvesting at any point, but keep rinsing the remainder
15. Start another jar while the first is in production, to keep going through the season.

Some helpful tips:

- When draining your sprouts, add the water to your indoor watering can for your indoor plants.
- Put your sprout jars on a plate or other container to protect your counter, shelf or table.
- Have a paper towel under your sprout jars to collect additional moisture and prevent from rolling.
- If sprouts in the soil fall over because of the force of the watering, gently lift their “heads” to help them stand tall again.
- Rotate the position of the containers of planted vegetables for more equal sunlight and air.

Some ideas to enjoy your garden more:

- Swap seeds and plants with friends and family,
- Start your own garden club,
 - Or join one in your town
- Relax as you tend your food and flowers
- The plants give you oxygen,
 - While you provide them with carbon dioxide
- Enjoy the fruits of your labors
 - Eat better
 - Be more healthy
 - Treat your garden as friends and family
 - It is all right to talk to them too...
 - Enjoy the process

Happy Gardening!

Resources in the Greater Manchester Area:

Heart Seed,

304 Main St, Wethersfield, CT
06109
(860) 529-2537,
Website: heartseed.com

Garden Sales

308 Oakland Street, Manchester,
Ct. 06042
860649-9406

Woodland Gardens

168 Woodland Street, Manchester,
Ct. 06042
860-643-7484
Website: .woodlandgardensct.com

The Parade Health Shoppe

860-646-8178

Online:

Nowfoods.com

Website: nowfoods.com
Sprouting jars and seeds

High Mowing Seed Company

Website: highmowingseeds.com
All organic seeds

Gardener's Supply

Website: gardeners.com
Everything for the gardener

Johnny's Seeds

Website: johnnyseeds.com
Website: cthealthshopp.com