



Herbs

Herbs are one of the easiest groups of plants to grow. In general they require sun and well drained, average soil. A few exceptions are mints and parsley which require more shade and moist, rich soil. Many herbs are perennials – once planted they come back every year, some are even evergreen. A little pinching keeps most herbs nicely shaped and bushy.

Uses for herbs are endless: Culinary – used in cooking to flavor foods and as teas; medicinal; aromatic – in potpourris, sachets, soaps, colognes; landscaping – many herbs provide interesting textures and contrasting foliage, as groundcovers, as border plants; companion planting – when planted with other plants in your garden certain herbs improve the growth of the plants or flavor of fruits or vegetables, deter insects and disease or attract bees.

Drying Herbs

Cut leafy herbs for drying early in the day. Oil content is highest at this time. Leafy herbs are ready from the time flower buds begin to form until the flowers are half open (exception; parsley can be cut any time, sage and tarragon cut early in the summer). Don't cut perennial herbs back more than one third. Annual herbs may be cut 2 and 3 crops for drying during summer. Don't cut perennial herbs after September or new growth won't have a chance to mature before cold weather.

Leafy herbs: Tie woody-stemmed herbs in small bundles, hang upside down – dry in a dark room to preserve colour, good air circulation and warm temperature. Your herbs will be crumbly dry in a few days to a week – store in an air tight container.

Seed herbs: The seeds are ready when they turn brown, dry the seeds in the sun for several days – separate chaff from seed, continue to dry in the sun for another 1 ½ weeks – store in an air tight container.

The following is a list of some of the more common herbs with general information including their growing requirements and uses.

| Herb | Life Span | Requirements | Uses | Parts Used | Companion to |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Anise | Annual | Sun, part shade | Culinary | Leaves, Seeds, Flowers | |
| Basil | Annual | Sun, part shade, good drainage | Culinary | Leaves | Tomatoes |
| Borage | Annual | Sun - shade, moisture | Decorative / Culinary | Flowers | Tomatoes, Squash, Strawberries |
| Burnet | Perennial | Sun, good drainage | Culinary | Leaves | |
| Catnip | Perennial | Sun-shade | Culinary | Leaves. Stems | Has pestyroots Do not plant in a vegetable garden |
| Caraway | Biennial | Sun, good drainage | Culinary | Seeds | Loosens soil |
| Chervil | Annual | Part shade, moisture | Culinary | Leaves | Radishes |
| Chives | Perennial | Sun, rich moist soil | Culinary | Leaves | Carrots |
| Coriander | Annual | Sun, light soil | Culinary | Leaves, Seeds | |
| Dill | Annual | Sun, good drainage | Culinary | Leaves, Seeds | Cabbages |
| Fennel | Perennial | Sun, light shade | Culinary | Leaves, Seeds | Do not plant with Dill, they cross pollinate |
| Horehound | Perennial | Sun, dry soil | Medicinal | Leaves | |
| Lavender | Perennial | Sun, dry soil | Aromatic | Flowers | |
| Lemon Balm | Perennial | Sun-part shade, moisture | Aromatic | Leaves | |
| Marjoram | Perennial | Sun, moist, alkaline soil | Culinary | Leaves | Everything, improves flavour |
| Mint | Perennial | Part to full shade, moist rich soil | Aromatic / Culinary | Leaves | Cabbages and Tomatoes |
| Oregano | Perennial | Sun, good drainage | Culinary | Leaves | |
| Parsley | Biennial | Part to full shade, moist rich soil | Culinary | Leaves, Stems | |
| Pennyroyal | Perennial | Part shade, moisture | Groundcover / Culinary | Leaves | Same as mint |
| Rosemary | Perennial | Sun, good drainage, dry soil | Aromatic /Culinary | Leaves | Cabbages, Beans, Carrots, Sage |
| Sage | Perennial | Sun, good drainage | Culinary / Medicinal | Leaves | Rosemary, Carrots, Cabbages |
| Stevia | Annual | | Culinary | Leaves | |
| Summer Savory | Annual | Sun, light moist soil | Culinary | Leaves | Beans and Onions |
| Winter Savory | Perennial | | Culinary | Leaves | |
| Tarragon | Perennial | Sun, good drainage, rich soil | Culinary | Leaves | Good Everywhere |
| Thyme | Perennial | Sun, sandy dry soil | Aromatic / Culinary | Leaves | Good Everywhere |