

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

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