



# Growing Guide: Basil



## Top 5 Reasons to Grow Basil

1. Easy to grow
2. Nutritious – high in vitamins K and A and contains many trace minerals like calcium, copper, and magnesium
3. Thrives in containers – basil is the perfect plant to grow on your windowsill
4. Attracts Pollinators – bees and butterflies love basil as much as we do!
5. Added Benefits – there are tons of other uses for basil. Basil tea is excellent for digestion and can work as an anti-inflammatory. It also can be used as a natural cleaning product or be added to skincare!

## Step 1: Sowing

**When to Sow:** Sow seeds anytime from April to June in a module tray or container.

**Where to Sow:** Basil likes a Mediterranean climate (don't we all) so either grow it indoors in a pot, in a glasshouse or a polytunnel. Basil thrives in well-drained soil, positioned in a sunny window

**How to Sow:** Fill a pot almost to the top with seed compost. Give it a little bang on the table to settle down the compost. Sprinkle the basil seeds on surface, spacing as evenly as you can. Cover with a small layer of compost – around 5mm and then give it a gentle water.

**Sowing Tip:** If sowing outside sow near tomato plants. Basil is an excellent companion plant for tomatoes. Basil is effective at repelling tomato hornworms and can improve their flavours.

## Step 2: Growing

**Transplanting:** Basil will germinate in about two weeks. When it's about 7–10cm high, you can transplant into a larger pot or the ground. If planting in the garden allow 30cm between plants.

**Growing Tip:** Fertilise soil once a month if growing indoors. Make sure to water often in hot weather.

## Step 3 - Harvest

**When to Harvest:** Start picking the leaves of basil as soon as the plants are around 25cm high. Cut off the growing tip of the plant with a scissors. This encourages the plant to get bushy rather than tall and straggly!

**Harvesting Tip:** Harvest in the early morning, when leaves are at their juiciest.

## GIY Tips

- » Basil likes to grow in a sunny, wind-free location but it also likes ventilation (so if growing inside, place beside a window that opens.
- » Over watering or lack of food is generally the reason people kill basil plants. Water only when the compost dries out, and give it a liquid feed if required.