

# GARDENING at Home

## Overview

Thank you for downloading our **GARDENING** at Home guide. This instructional guide will introduce you to the world of gardening by teaching you how to construct simple gardens sustainably from resources at your home. By the end, you will learn the basics of gardening whilst growing and harvesting fresh and healthy produce from the comfort of your home. From helping you choose the best-suited soil and seeds, to ensuring your garden's sustainability—we will be there to guide you.

## Step One - Finding your Perfect Space

Now that you your gardening space, it's time to draft your game plan. In other words, let's start preparing. Don't worry, it's smooth sailing from here! The first step is to find the best place to start your garden. Whether that's on a windowsill or in your backyard, the perfect place for your garden—while keeping in mind the resources available to you—will translate to the best results.

You might be wondering: “Well how do I know the best place for my garden?” Good question! Determining the best place for your garden is crucial. Generally, locations that have these three elements listed below are perfect.



1. Good air circulation.
2. Full or partial sun.
3. Temperatures ranging from 55-85 degrees Fahrenheit (13-30 degrees Celcius.)

If you're still feeling indecisive about the location; please reference our table below that provides descriptive data on the perfect places for your garden depending on the herbs you will choose.

Name of Herb	Lighting Requirements	Days until first sprout
Oregano	Full sun	7-14
Parsley	Full sun	20-30
Cilantro	Partial shade	7-10
Basil	Full sun	5-10
Chives	Full Sun	7-14

Indoor-ignore the light requirements as long as you choose the location with the most sunlight. In the outdoors “partial sun” herbs should spend the majority of their time in shady spaces. Plants categorized as “full sun” should only be in direct sunlight for a maximum of 6 hours.

# Step Two - Setting up & Preparing.

## Constructing Your Container

Containers depend on the amount and type of herbs you are planning to grow. If you want to grow multiple herbs in the same container, you want to aim for an object that is around 5 by 15 inches. Alternatively, if you're looking to grow specific herbs instead of a plot of this tenure, we would recommend you use smaller individual containers that are around the size of a mason jar (3 by 6 inches, 16 - 32oz). Leftover terracotta pots/plastic cups work great if you're only trying to grow a specific herb. With this being said, some materials might not accommodate these strict guidelines, so roughly estimate around these parameters.

After making this decision, you're going to want to hunt for proper materials and objects to grow your herbs in. To fulfill the modern of gardening sustainably, we suggest that you try your best to reuse items. For the Baby Sprout, and most other garden chassis, it's ideal to find materials that are waterproof, like hard plastics or metals. For example, you can reuse plastic food containers or cups that are relatively close to our target size. Once you select a sufficient container, poke 3-4 half centimeter holes at the bottom for drainage. If your container's material does not allow for such modifications, fine gravel or sand placed at the bottom of your container is a fair substitution.



Possible Containers:	Coffee Canisters	Tea Canisters	Cardboard
Plastic Cups	Old Drawers	Milk Jugs	Plastic Bottles
Large Yogurt Containers	Food Containers	Teapots	Moving Containers
Terrcota Pots	Plastic Buckets	Takeout Containers	Mason Jars
Baskets	Trash Cans	Wooden Crates	Old Furniture

## Step Three - Ordering Gardening Essentials:

After selecting the adequate chassis for your garden, it's time to get gardening. The first step is to order supplies like soil and seeds that simply can't be found at home. Down below, you will find an order list containing specific seeds and soil that work best. Additionally, we have linked all the online shopping sites referenced in the following instructions, which we recommend. These shopping sites have the best availability and selection for gardening.

### 1. Johnny's Seeds (<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/>)

Good for availability and variety although it may be slightly expensive. In addition to seeds, Johnny's Seeds also sells soil, fertilizer, tools, pots, and various other items.

### 2. Burpee Seeds (<https://www.burpee.com/>)

Also good selection, availability, and variety, and also can tend to be pricier. Burpee Seeds offers similar products, so it's best to compare the two primarily on stock and availability.

### 3. Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/>)

Good for pots and a variety of growing containers. Most products that we list are available and Amazon with 2-day shipping.

Before planting your initial seeds, you will want to order a few crucial components. Like we mentioned earlier, the best sites to use are Johnny's Seeds and Burpee Seeds—use Amazon only when subject to availability. The first thing to order is soil. For all the plants in Baby Sprout, this [Organic Potting Mix](#) (found on Amazon), should suffice. We recommend this soil because it's organic, cheap, eligible for 2-day shipping on Amazon, and is enriched with fertilizer; which means you don't have to buy anything additional.

If limited by availability, most other potting mixes or soils, and various organic fertilizers are also applicable.

After you have secured the proper soil and fertilizer, the next step is to order your herb seeds. If you are interested in growing multiple herbs for a cheap price, we recommend you purchase the [Sow Right Seeds - Herb Garden Seed Collection](#) package on Amazon. This package contains Basil, Chives, Cilantro, Parsley, and Oregano Seeds; which makes for a perfect and symbiotic combination of flavorful herbs. Alternatively, if you want to select individual herbs, we recommend you visit [Johnny's Seeds](#) website which has a wide variety of organic herbs seeds.

Please keep in mind that our **GARDENING** at Home Sprout guide specifically mentions how to care for only the herbs in the Sow Right Seeds package.



## Step Four - Execution & Planting:

You have your game plan, so now it's time to play ball. Step three is all about planting and nurturing your sprouts—it's the fun part. If you have done all the requirements below, we give you the "okay" to start gardening.

### Planting / Sowing Your Seeds

**Step One:** Pour the soil into the container, and fill it an inch below the brim.

**Step Two:** Sprinkle 2-3 seeds on top of your soil around 1 area. It's important to plant more than one seed because some seeds are defective and won't sprout/germinate. But if you're growing chives, you should use 5 seeds.

**Step Three:** Lightly cover your seeds with another layer of soil (reference the table to see the exact amount of soil for each herb).

**Step Four:** Gently dampen the soil with water.

**Step One - Filling Your Container:**



**Step Two - Placing Seeds:**



**Step Three - Covering Seeds:**



**Step Four - First Watering:**



On the right is our table that provides additional information on the herbs you are planting. This table is important to reference for determining your seed depth, as well as spacing between different herb plants.

## Step Four - Execution & Planting Part 2:

### How to Navigate the Table.

#### > Light requirements?

Abiding by the light requirements for each herb your growing should be pretty easy as long as they are near a window while they are indoors. In other words, you can ignore the “partial” and “full sun” requirements as long as you choose the most sunlight ridden location available.

Otherwise, if your plant is outside, herbs that are categorized as “partial sun” should spend the majority of their time in shady spaces. Plants categorized as “full sun” should only be in direct sunlight for a maximum of 6 hours—spending the rest of their time in the shade.

#### > Planting Depth?

Like mentioned earlier, “planting depth” calls for how much soil you apply during the second layer. Make sure the layer of soil is light so that the herbs can sprout.

#### > Plant Spacing?

Spacing is only an important factor when you are planning to grow multiple herbs in the same plot. When spacing your plants, gauge each point from the general radius of where you sprinkled your seeds.

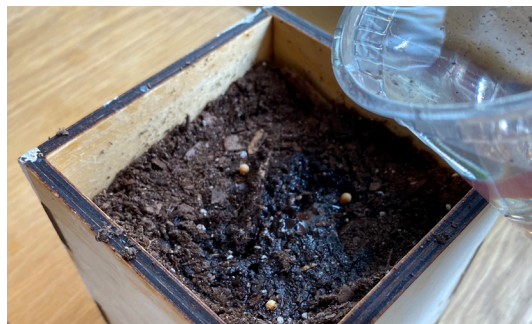
Name of Herb	Lighting Needs	Planting Depth	Plant Spacing	Days Until First Sprout
Oregano	Full sun	1/8 inch	15 inches	7-14 days
Parsley	Full sun	1/4 inch	3-6 inches	20-30 days
Cilantro	Partial shade	1/2 inch	8 inches	7-10 days
Basil	Full sun	1/4 inch	15 inches	5-10 days
Chives	Partial Shade	1/4 inch	6 inches	7-15 days

## Step Five - Maintaining Your Garden:

Now that you have rapidly maturing herb plants, it's important to properly support them. Down below are the necessary instructions crucial to maintaining your garden listed in chronological order:

### Watering

After planting your seeds, it's crucial to continuously water your plants. If you stuck to the herbs recommended previously (Basil, Chives, Cilantro, Parsley, and Oregano Seeds), daily watering, once or twice a day, should be sufficient. To ensure you



### Thinning

If you planted basil or oregano—or any other herbs that develop a main stalk, make sure to pick out any additional sprouts that are within a 15-inch radius of your initial sprout. This method is called thinning, and should be performed around 10-15 days after sowing/ planting your seeds.

### Pinching / Pruning

If you chose Basil, pruning your plant is extremely important so that it can grow fast and to its full potential. In the gardening world, this technique is called “pinching”. Basically, it's important to pinch your basil plant's leaves when your plant has grown to around six inches, and has accumulated a set of leaves towards the bottom and three sets of leaves on the top. Please remember that the first set of leaves on your basil plant are called cotyledon or seeds leaves, which shouldn't be cut off. The next leaves prior to this initial set are the ones that count, resembling larger “adult” leaves. To pinch your leaves, simply use scissors to cut the stem between the bottom two leaves and top three leaves.



### Transplanting

As your herbs grow larger the container you initially chose might not be sufficient for your plant's size. You can tell whether or not your plant needs a transplant if its roots are growing through and outside the holes of your container. If your herb plant qualifies for a transplant, first choose a larger container and follow the instructions on how to set up your gardening containers from Step Two. Then tug gently on the leaves of your plant—never the stem—until it roots up from soil. As you do this, make sure to use a

## Transplanting

If the soil you chose was the recommended one or contains added fertilizer, you're all set! If your selected soil does not have these additives, make sure to purchase a good organic fertilizer like [Neptune's Harvest Fertilizer](#). Otherwise, if you're looking for a more local solution, we recommend using compost which you can make from home. To learn more about how to do this at home, visit this link: [how to make compost](#).

## Step Six - When to Harvest:

Congratulations! You have made it to the last step, and hopefully by now you have a fruitful and prosperous home garden. As the title suggests, Step four is a time to harvest your crops, and most certainly enjoy them. In other words, to enjoy the fruits of your homegrown plants, it is important to properly harvest them so that they can rapidly regenerate for next year's harvest.

### Signs of Full Growth

Generally, herbs take around 40-50 days to fully grow. Though most herbs reach full maturity by this time, it is important to be 100% sure that your plants are ready for harvest, so you can get the most out of your plants. You can make sure your plants are fully ready for harvest by checking the leaves—or flowers in some cases—of your herb plants. In the table below, these characteristics are given specifically for each plant.

Name of Herb	Signs of Full Growth
Oregano	Stems are 4 inches tall.
Parsley	Leaf stems have 3 segments.
Cilantro	Plants are 4 to 6 inches long.
Basil	Plants are 6 to 8 inches tall.
Chives	Leaves are 6 inches tall.

### Basil



### Oregano



### Parsley



# Step Seven - Picking Your Herbs

Once you are certain that your herb plant is applicable for harvest, follow the next few steps to maximize the fruits of your garden. For each herb harvesting is different. Be sure to select the proper instructions that match your herb's name down below.

Name of Herb	How to Harvest
Oregano	You may pull off the tiny leaves and dry them separately or dry the entire stem and crumble off the crisp leaves. Bundle the stems together and hang them to dry Oregano in a dark, dry spot.
Parsley	Cut leaves from the outer portions of the plant whenever you need them. Leave the inner portions of the plant to mature.
Cilantro	Clip the leaves close to ground level.
Basil	Remove a few leaves from each section of the plant without cutting off any stems. Pinch off Basil leaves at the stem. Be gentle to avoid damaging or tearing the Basil stems attached.
Chives	Leave plenty left for regrowth, and cut by the stem. Both flowers and stalks are edible.

## Cilantro



## Chives



This concludes your journey with MintBox's Gardening at Home. We hope that we have taught you the basics and importance of gardening. If you found this handbook at all helpful please feel free to share it with your friends, family and on social media. You can follow us at [@mintbox.harvest](#) and share pictures of your garden at #goMintBox.

We would like to thank Micheal Shorr, Sebastian Martin and Morgan Jones for fostering our endeavors, the company would not be where it is today without them. In terms of supporting this Gardening Book, we are extremely grateful for editors: Samantha Sokol and Christopher Richter, as well as our gardening expert: Kate Scarborough.