

## Growing Kitchen Herbs Indoors

**Basil, Chives, Cilantro, Mint, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Thyme**

**Light:** Grow best in a southern window with 5-6 hours of sun per day. Herbs that are not exposed to proper light conditions will become thin and spindly, produce smaller leaves, and have a reduced aroma.

**Water:** Most herbs prefer “dry feet” or to stay on the dry side. Thoroughly water when the surface to approximately 1 inch below is dry. Oregano, Sage and Thyme should dry out slightly between watering. When growing Rosemary, do not allow the potting mix to dry out completely. Basil, Chives, Mint prefer moist soil.



**Mist:** Most herbs need additional humidity growing indoors. Mist every few days or group containers in a shallow tray filled with pebbles and a small amount of water. Remember to continue to mist when you move them outside in the spring until they have acclimated!

**Temperatures:** Prefer 65-75 degrees F day; 55-65 degrees F night. Good air circulation will help to control pest and disease.

**Containers:** Be creative but avoid over sizing the container. Containers should be 2-4” larger than old one when transplanting.

**Soil:** Use a good potting soil mixture. Mints, chives and parsley need more moisture-holding materials in the mix, add compost and vermiculite to improve moisture retention. Rosemary, thyme and oregano prefer fast -draining. Add some extra sand, perlite or fine gravel for extra drainage.

**Fertilize:** Use a diluted solution (1/2 recommended rate) weekly.

**Maintenance:** Repot when roots grow through the drainage hole! The best time to repot is in the early spring so that herbs can grow into the new medium during the growing season. Perennial herbs can be repotted several times to accommodate new growth.

**Harvesting:** Most herbs are ready to be harvested just as the flower buds first appear. The leaves contain the maximum amount of volatile oils at this stage of growth, giving the greatest flavor and fragrance to the finished product.

*Annual herbs, e.g. Basil,* can be heavily cut back during harvest. Cut just above a leaf or a pair of leaves, leaving 4 to 6 inches of the stem for later growth. If an annual herb, e.g. Cilantro, is grown for its seed, allow the plants to mature fully and then harvest them. Collect the seed heads when they are turning brown by cutting them from the plants and drying them on a tray made of very fine wire mesh.

*Perennial herbs, e.g. Rosemary,* should not be cut back as heavily as annuals. Remove only about one-third of the top growth at a time, in some cases only the leafy tips should be removed. Careful pruning insures that new growth will be produced and a compact habit of growth maintained.

# Kitchen Herb Garden

- Grow potted Herbs indoors year-round in a sunny spot.



- Grow Herbs outdoors - in ground or in containers.
- Outdoor Herbs can be Annual (ex: Basil) to be planted each Spring, Biennial (ex: Parsley) planted every 2 yrs. or Perennial (ex: Thyme) planted once to return year after year.
- Grow Herbs among your vegetables, flowers and/or shrubs.
- Be sure to confine/contain invasive Herbs, i.e. Mints & Lemon Balm.
- Enjoy Herb flowers & scents – echinacea, pineapple sage, lavender and many more.
- Enjoy Herb seasonings & flavors, i.e. onion or garlic chives & lovage (celery).
- Enjoy Herb infused vinegars and oils.
- Find your favorite flavors & scents to start growing your own HERB Garden!



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