

Everything important you need to know about seed starting!

SOIL : The best soil to use for seed starting is light & fine so young roots can easily grow & push through the soil. It is best if the soil mix you choose contains sphagnum peat moss for moisture retention & vermiculite or perlite for aeration. We recommend & carry "Fertilome Seed & Cutting" soil mix which contains sphagnum peat moss, horticultural perlite, AND limestone & dolomite which helps out with adjusting the soil's PH. Fertilizer is not needed at this beginning stage!

LIGHT: Your seeds will need bright light to germinate! If you are sowing seeds in a greenhouse, four-seasons room, or a brightly lit window, you're good to go! YAY YOU! Your seeds are going to LOVE the natural sunlight. However, if you're sowing seeds in an unlit space like an inner room without windows or a basement, you will need to provide grow lights. Make sure you purchase an actual grow light instead of using normal house light bulbs. Grow lights actually mimic daylight. We offer several kinds of these in our Garden Center! We carry grow lights on string cords to hang, as well as grow light bulbs that can screw directly into any light socket you already have... which is VERY convenient!

PLANTING: As always, read your seed packets! They will provide most of the information you need to know. Reading instructions always sets you up for success ;) The packet will tell you when to sow, how deep to bury the seed, how long the seed will take to germinate, when to move them outdoors, etc! Some seeds can actually be sown directly outside & do better that way, so make sure you sort out what needs to be started indoors vs what can actually just be popped right into the garden as a seed! Lets talk about pots really quick. We carry a nice variety of different options. We have the traditional black plastic seed cells trays (usually 48ish openings), the trays without holes to go underneath, & the grow dome that snaps onto the top. Planting in peat pots has become pretty common... we carry them in a 3" pot size. Normally you will want to plant 2-3 seeds in each of those for best germination results. We do carry the peat pellets as well! These are pretty cool. Add water, add seeds & watch them germinate! The really handy part is that you can pop the whole thing into the ground when you're ready to plant outside. The roots will grow right through the peat. We sell these pellets individually, or in little greenhouse grow dome kits. If you're wanting the easiest soil option, we also have seed cell kits that already are filled with organic seed starting soil. Pop in your seed, water it, & you're good to go!

MOISTURE: Consistent moisture is KEY for germination. Make sure the soil is always damp, but not soaking & drowning the seeds. This is where grow domes come in handy. They provide a greenhouse effect, which keeps humidity & moisture trapped inside. Once your seeds have sprouted, remove the dome & gently begin watering. You can water with gentle overhead sprinkles (the babies are fragile!) or you can bottom water your sprouts, letting them sit in water for 20-30 minutes & then removing them... good to go!

WARMTH: Soil warmth should be around 65-80 degrees. Many people rely on sunlight or grow lights to provide the warmth, but if you're in a chilly area like the basement, heat mats work wonders! Even farmers will use heat mats inside the greenhouse to quickly raise the temperature of the soil! This will really boost & speed up germination time! Find them here in our Garden Center!

HARDENING: Come spring, once temperatures are above freezing, begin to set your sprouts outside for an hour or so, on a cloudy day... gradually increase their outside time & sunlight exposure so they adjust to being outside! This gets them ready to take on the elements once you plant outside!

PLANTING OUTSIDE: Once frost is past & your seedlings are hardened, it's time to transplant them into the ground! Use those handy dandy seed packet instructions to figure out spacing! Dig a hole just big enough for the roots to fit into... & make sure to pack the soil closely so there's no air pockets. Give them a drink & we're off to the races! YeeHaw!