



Whip up pesto with basil, guacamole with cilantro and mojitos with mint using homegrown herbs.

The ultimate guide to growing herbs at home

There is something empowering about growing herbs at home. It saves money, flavours dishes and helps you make the most of seasonal produce. So, stop using dried parsley and start your own herb garden with these simple tips.

Do I need a lot of space to grow my herbs?

You don't need a huge garden to get started. In fact, one of the best places to grow herbs is on your kitchen windowsill. It has plenty of sunlight streaming in and provides a constant reminder to water your plants. You just have to make sure you choose the right herbs to suit these conditions.

What herbs should I grow?

Once you know what space you have to work with, it's time to start thinking about the herbs and spices you use most in your cooking. This is quite a personal choice depending on your household's go-to cuisine. If you like cooking Mexican food, try cilantro or mint, and if you're more into Italian cooking, perhaps you should lean towards basil or oregano that is popular in Mediterranean cooking.

What are some hardy herbs to start off with?

Some herbs are more delicate than others. If you're a first-time gardener who wants to start slow, here are five hardy herbs that are easy to grow at home:

Parsley

There are so many benefits of growing parsley. It's easy to grow and can be harvested at any time, so you get at least 12 months of fresh parsley from a single seedling. Plant the herbs in a pot or garden during Autumn or Spring if you want it to flourish. [Try our oven baked prawn and chorizo paella.](#)

Rosemary

Looking for a herb that requires little attention? Then rosemary is for you. Just plant it outdoors in full sun, and it can last for a number of years, surviving on natural elements such as sunshine and rainwater. [Try our rosemary and olive focaccia.](#)

Mint

Mint is a must-have herb that can be grown in the sun or shade. But it can flourish out of control, taking over your garden if you are not careful. It's best to plant it in a large container or pot so it doesn't become root bound. [Try our slow cooked lamb with minted pea mash.](#)

Chives

If you like Asian cooking, chives are a great herb to grow in your garden. Used in variety of dishes, this herb can be grown in pots or used to create garden borders. It's tough, but performs best in cool weather conditions, so plant it during winter in full sun for the best result. [Try our mashed potato recipe with chives.](#)

Basil

Basil is one of the most fragrant and versatile herbs to grow at home. It prefers moist, well drained soil and will require frequent pruning to encourage new growth. It's a slightly tougher herb to grow but worth it when you can enjoy home-made Italian food, seasoned with fresh basil. [Try our basil and mozzarella meatballs.](#)

How do I plant my herbs?

- Prepare your soil and ensure its full of nutrients
- Pot your plants in a plant solution with atleast 6 hours of sunlight per day and enough room for the plant to reach full size
- Water the potted herb prior to planting
- Make a planting hole larger enough for the herb
- Carefully tap the herb out of the pot
- Check the roots and gently tease out if necessary
- Place the plant in the hole and backfill around the plant, pressing the soil down firmly
- Water generously while the new plant settles in

How to preserve your herbs?

If your plants are producing more herbs than you need, don't let it go to waste. You can spread the love by sharing your fresh herbs with a neighbour or preserve them so you can use them when they are not in season. Some preservation methods include:

Dry

Dry your herbs by airdrying them in bunches upside down or putting them in the oven on a very low temperature. Then store them in a cool, dry place.

Freeze

Place your herbs on baking paper and put them in the freezer. Once they are frozen, place them in a zip lock bag to keep the leaves separated.

Convert

Turn your fresh herbs into something tasty with a longer shelf life, like turning your excess basil into pesto, or dill into a delicious sauce.