



Know What You Grow!



Basil

Scientific Name: *Ocimum basilicum*

Recommended Varieties

- Sweet Basil
- Thai Basil
- Purple Basil
- Lemon Basil
- Greek Basil

More Info: [Master Gardener Fact Sheet](#)

Companion Plants

Highly aromatic basil leaves can protect nearby plants, such as asparagus, peppers, root vegetables and tomatoes, from garden pests.

Source: [Balcony Garden Web](#)

Growing Information

Annual

Basil is a sun-loving annual that thrives during summer months in the Inland Valley and Desert. Basil can be grown as an indoor plant in a sunny window.

Ideal Planting Window

From seed: Start indoor in pots in spring. Transplant outdoors when plants are 2 – 4” tall, and there’s no longer danger of frost.

From cuttings: Root basil cuttings in a glass of water, and then plant outdoors.

Growing Guidance

Light: Full sun 6 – 8 hours a day.

Soil: Well drained and amended soil.

Water: Water often. Mulch to retain moisture.

Harvesting

Start picking leaves as soon as plants are 6 – 8” tall to promote the growth of new leaves.

Source: [Old Farmers Almanac](#)



Basil makes a nice container plant on the patio or in the yard.

Interesting Facts

- **Basil** is a culinary herb of the mint family (*Lamiaceae*). It can be used fresh or dried.
- It originated from India at least 5000 years ago. It is now grown global-wide.
- There are over 160 varieties of basil that differ in size, color of the leaves and flowers, and chemical composition which determines the taste of the plant.
- Basil has light green, silky leaves that are oval. Leaves are oppositely arranged on the stem. Some varieties have purple leaves.
- Each type of basil has unique aroma. Sweet basil has clove-like aroma, lemon basil has lemony taste while cinnamon basil has sweet, cinnamon-like aroma.
- Basil is a rich source of vitamins A, B6 and K, and minerals such as manganese and magnesium.

More info: SoftSchools.com

Contact Information



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Drying and Storing

Dry basil leaves by placing in a single layer on a paper towel, out of direct sun, for 1 week. When leaves crumble easily between your fingers, they are dry enough. Basil can also be dried in the oven or microwave.

Store in airtight containers in a cool, dry place away from sunlight. Dried herbs can be kept for 2–3 years, but for best flavor should be used within one year.

More Info: [Herb Gardening Basics](#)

Suggested Uses



- Sweet Basil is a basic ingredient in pesto
- Basil is used in many cuisines, from Italian to Thai and Vietnamese foods, including pastas, sauces, meat, chicken, fish, salads, beverages, and even ice cream.
- Fresh basil leaves can be used instead of lettuce on a sandwich.
- Basil pairs with mozzarella cheese to make a Caprice salad.
- Dried basil is used in potpourri, sachet bags and soaps – easy, do-it-yourself gift projects.
- The oil from basil is used to repel insects, particularly mosquitos.
- For centuries, basil has been used for medicinal purposes, such as a headache remedy.

[Gardening Know-How](#)

All photos: AOL Images