

How to grow herbs

Part of the Pacific Nurseries
'How to...' series

Chives

Used for salads, soups, sauces, vegetables, fish and poultry. Chives grow to about 6-12" (15-30cm). Best positioned in individual pots or as an edging. Basic care includes removing faded flowers; lift, divide and replant the clumps every 3-4 years; pick chives for culinary use by snipping leaves at the base of the plant.

Sage

Commonly used for stuffing of poultry, pork and other rich meats. Sage grows up to 2 x 2 ft (60 x 60cm), usually smaller. Best positioned in pots or tubs. Prune in spring, water in dry weather, replace every 3-5 years and use free draining compost.

Marjoram

Used for meat, poultry, fish, salads, soups, stuffing. Marjoram grows to 6-24 x 6-12" (15-60 x 15-30cm). Best positioned in individual pots; compact forms as edging in sink gardens or in cracks between paving slabs. Pinch out tips to encourage branching; cut back above ground growth in autumn and protect roots against prolonged frost.

Bay

Used for stews, soups, casseroles, sauces and milk puddings. Bay can grow to 4 x 3 ft (120 x 90cm) in containers. Best positioned as topiary specimen in a container or in mixed herb tubs. Basic care includes regular watering in spring and summer.

Rosemary

Used for stuffing, roasts, stews, marinades, and herb vinegars. Rosemary can grow up to 3 x 3 ft (1 x 1m) in containers. Best positioned in a mixed herb tub or trailing over a wall. You should water regularly in spring and summer.

Mint

Used for sauces, jellies, vegetables, drinks, garnishing. Mint can grow between 1-36" (2.5-90cm) wide spreading. Best positioned in sink gardens, or as edging; stronger growing forms in individual pots or tubs. You should water generously in dry weather; cut back above ground in autumn; lift, divide and replant every 3-4 years.

French tarragon

Used for chicken, fish, seafood, sauces, herb vinegar. Can grow up to 24 x 18" (60 x 45cm). Best positioned at the back of a group of containers or against a wall. You should water only in dry weather; pinch out growing tips frequently to promote bushy growth; cut back above ground growth in autumn; lift and divide every 3-4 years.

Lavender

Used for cooking, tea and medicine. Lavender can grow to 24 inches (60cm). Best positioned in warm well-drained soil and full sun. When first planted you should provide a handful of compost in the planting hole, keep regularly watered during the first growing season. Plant next to a stone or brick wall. Prune only a couple of inches.

Parsley

Used for salads, soups, stews, sauces, stuffing, vegetables, garnishing. Parsley grows to 24 x 6-18" (20-60 x 15-45cm). They are best positioned in individual pots or containers. Keep well watered in dry weather, pinch out flower buds as soon as they appear.

Thyme

Used for soups, stews, meat, fish and poultry. Thyme grows to about 1 x 1 ft (30 x 30cm) for shrubby types, 1 x 12" (2.5 x 30cm) for creeping varieties. Thyme is best positioned in pots or sink gardens; creeping forms in cracks between paving slabs or as edging. Basic care includes watering in dry weather, prune in spring and after flowering, lift, divide, and replant creeping forms every 3-5 years.



For an economical, year-round supply of fresh flavours, try growing your own herbs.

Culinary herbs are grown for the flavour or aroma of the leaves - or occasionally their roots, stems, flowers or seeds. Their attractive foliage can fill the air with fragrance and they are an instantly available ingredient for your cooking and a perfect garnish for a finished dish.

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