

Growing Grapes

Grape vines, if well grown, can produce good crops for more than forty years. Different varieties produce fruit that is excellent for eating fresh or for processing into jam, jelly, juice or with many good home wines. Vines can also have ornamental value as screening or for shade in arbours. Well grown, established vines can produce ten kg or more of fruit per vine. Below is a quick guide for growing grapes.

Category	Directions and Notes
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunny location in any well drained soil that contains good levels of humus.
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peat moss or cattle manure can be added to the soil when the vines are planted.
Planting Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most plants are now potted so they can be planted at any time from early spring until fall. Vines to be grown on wire trellises should be planted 2 ½ to 3 metres apart. Those to be grown on an arbour for shade should be planted 1.2 metres apart.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vines should be watered regularly during dry seasons.
Harvesting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Special Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some fruit may be expected during the third year but full crops are not produced until the fifth year. A system for training the vines should be selected during the second growing season. The “Kniffin” system with three levels of horizontal side vines is the most popular. <p>Kniffin System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first strong shoot should be twisted loosely about a piece of twine that runs from the base of the vine to the top wire. This shoot will form the main trunk. When the vine reaches the top wire, cut it off just above the wire, and tie it tightly to the wire. Each spring, select six canes of the previous year’s growth to tie along the wires. Select strong canes, the thickness of a pencil and ones that originate as close as possible to the main trunk. <p>Fan System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Fan” system of training the vines is best used in areas where winter temperatures fall below -30C. This system allows one to take the vines down to cover them for winter protection. Vines are trained in one of the above ways by pruning in March or early April and tying the vines to support wires.
Varieties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vanessa, Sovereign Coronation

