

Starting Seeds Indoors

1. Most annual seeds should be started in March and April. (Exceptions include: perennials which will bloom the first year, start these in January; and slow annuals like pansies, start these in February). Some hardy seeds can be started outdoors as soon as the ground can be worked such as sweet pea and viola.
2. Use a sterile medium like peat moss, Pro Mix, or vermiculite.
3. Fill containers with moist (not soggy) planting medium and firm down lightly.
4. Sprinkle seed evenly and press down firmly so they have good contact with the medium.
5. Tiny seeds need not be covered with a layer of soil if started indoors. Check seed package for directions on seed depth.
6. Water from below so as not to dislodge the seeds. Do not saturate the soil. If this is not possible spray the seeds with a mister.
7. Light is often not required to germinate the seeds but warmth from the bottom helps. Check the seed package for any specific requirements for germination.
8. Move the seeds to the brightest window or under an artificial light-grow unit as soon as they sprout. They generally prefer a cool temperature of 16-18 degrees Celsius.
9. Water carefully! Too much and seedlings can damp off or rot!
10. When the temperatures are warm enough outside you can begin to harden off your seedlings by placing them outdoors in a warm spot for short periods at a time, gradually increasing the length of time spent outdoors. This adapts the plants to the bright sunlight, wind, and cooler temperatures outside.

