

# Vegetables A-Z: Garden Maintenance Tips

By  
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# Sections

1. Planting
2. Maintenance
3. Harvesting

# Planting



# Planting in the Shade

## Sunlight

Full sun plants – 6-8 hours

Partial shade plants – 3-6 hours



## Shade Tolerant Vegetables

**Greens:** arugula, Asian greens, chard, kale, spinach, lettuce

**Culinary herbs:** chives, oregano, cilantro, parsley, scallions

**Root vegetables:** beets, carrots, potatoes, radishes, turnips

**Legumes:** peas, beans (dwarf and bush varieties grow better)

**Fruits:** currant, gooseberry, strawberry

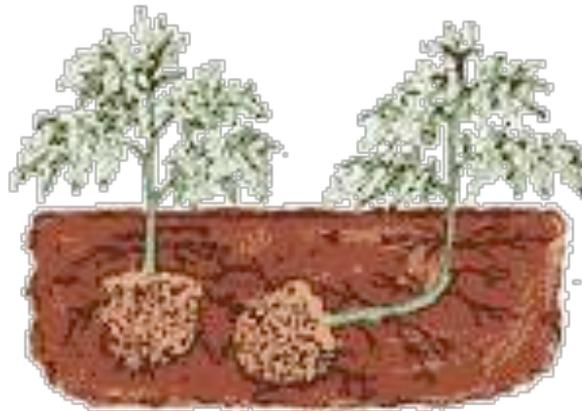
## Ways to Increase Sunlight

- Paint south facing walls white
- Reflective Mulching (aluminum foil)



# Plant Some Transplants Extra Deep

- Transplants that may benefit from deep plantings
  - Tomatoes
  - Many cool weather
  - any transplants that's "leggy" or too tall
- Plant up to the bottom first leaves.
  - Plant tomatoes 2/3 into the ground
- Roots will form on the buried stems making the plant stronger.



# Growing Potatoes in a Bag

1. use a breathable bag like burlap
2. Roll sides down until the sack is about 6-8 inches high.
3. Add soil/compost mix
4. Plant 3-4 potato slips in bag, equally distanced from each other.
5. Every time the plant reaches 6-8 inches, roll up the sides more and add 2-3 more inches to mound up the soil.
6. After potatoes stops flowering and plant begins to die off, wait two weeks then harvest.
7. Dump sack to harvest.



Half fill Gro-Sack with soil or compost. Plant tubers 4in deep.



As plants grow add more soil or compost to fill Gro-Sack.



Water regularly and harvest in as little as 7 weeks.

# Sprouting and Planting Sweet Potatoes

- If sweet potato comes from grocery ask if it's a bush or vine.
1. Use tooth picks to prop up a sweet potato in a glass of water.
    - Store in a warm area.
    - Change out the water every few days to keep from rotting
    - If any part of potato rots cut it off.
  2. Wait until the sprouts grow 5-6 inches then pluck them.
  3. Place each sprout in a shallow glass of water to encourage rooting.
  4. Once roots start growing in a few days plant in a soft soil mound.



# Maintenance



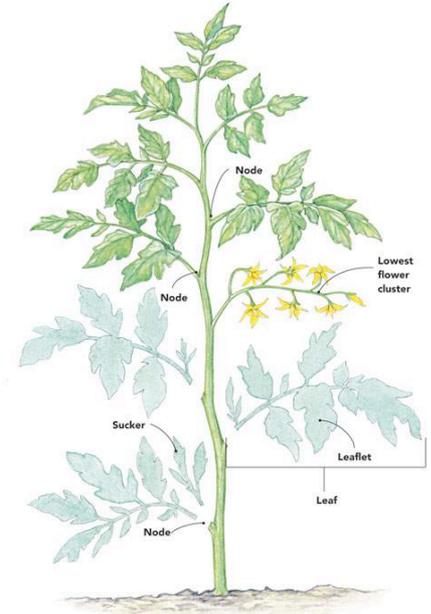
# Pruning Indeterminate Tomatoes

## Benefits

- directs more energy to the fruit increasing its size and quality
- allows more sunlight and circulation to enter the plant decreasing pest and diseases

## Directions

- Prune a tomato to look like a long and narrow tree with 90 degree angle branches
- Pinch (don't cut) "suckers", branches that grow in the crotch of a branch.
- Remove all leaves below the lowest flowering branch and yellowing branches.
- Until the plant reaches 18 inches remove all blossoms and fruit.



**This is what's called a sucker!!!  
Prune and plant these to grow  
a whole new  
tomato plant!!!**

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# Cracking Plants

## Tomatoes

- Result of irregular moisture
- Still edible but won't keep long

### *Prevention*

- 2-3'' mulch around plant
- Water the same regardless of rain/dry spells

## Cabbage

- Result of a sudden growth spur
- Harvest right away
- Or pull cabbage up slightly to twist a half turn to dislodge roots.
  - This will slow the growth



# Self Pollinating Cucurbits

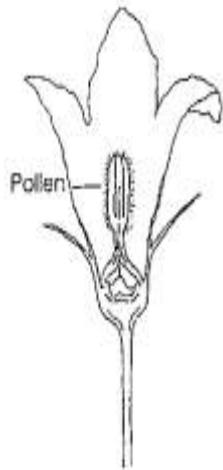
Hand pollinate to increase  
pollination of cucurbits

(squash, pumpkins, cucumber,  
melons, etc.)

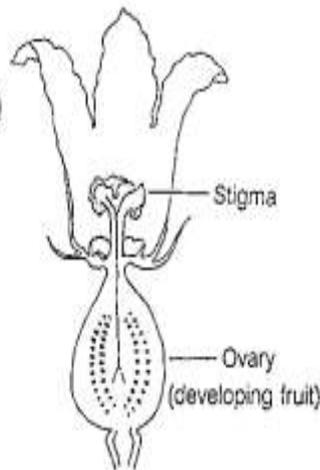
1. Tear off the male plant and all its  
flowers
2. Dip and rub it into the female flowers.



Male

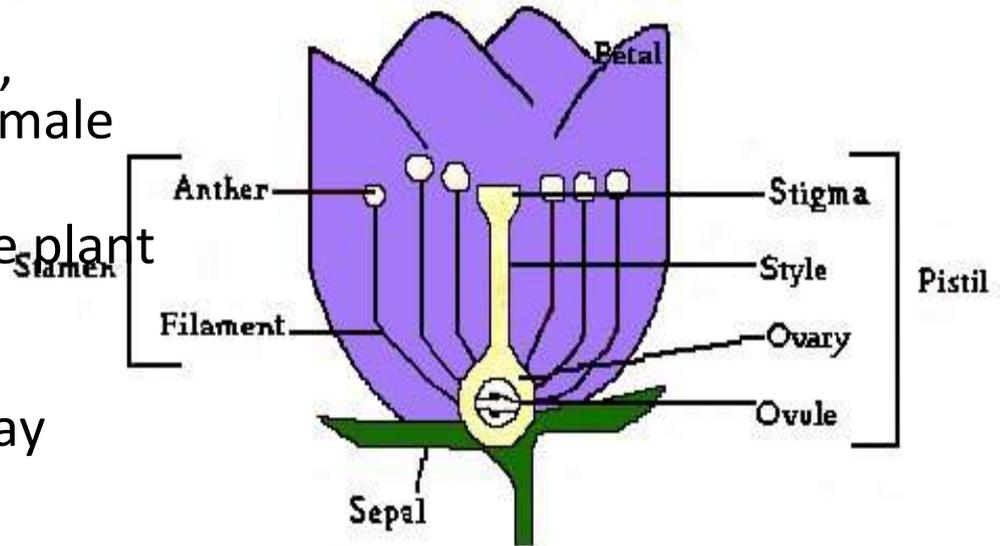


Female



# Shaking pollination

- Many vegetable are self fertilizing, meaning the flowers have both female and male parts
- Improve pollination by shaking the plant with your hand or an electric toothbrush.
- Repeat this process every other day until fruits begin to form



## Self fertilizing plants

- Tomatoes
- Green/chili peppers
- Eggplant
- Peanuts
- Sweet peas
- Green beans



# How to Dig Out a Squash Borer

- Locate borer hole(s) with frass
- Use a sharp knife to cut open stem upward of the holes until you locate the larvae.
- SQUISH
- Bury the wound and water.



## *Prevention*

- Wrap the base of each squash plant with aluminum foil/panty hose to prevent the moth from laying its eggs.
- Row covers with self pollination.



# Blossom End Rot

- Caused by lack of calcium from low pH or uneven watering

## Prevention

- Add compost every year – *buffers pH*
- Mix calcium amendments when planting
  - Baking soda
  - Crushed eggshells/tea
  - Bonemeal – waste product
  - Epsom salt (magnesium/calcium)
- Use mulch
- Avoid high nitrogen fertilizers

## Treatment

- foliar sprays
  - Crushed egg shell tea
  - Epsom salt
- Redo prevention practices
- Pick affected fruit



\*Be careful how strong lime is\*

**Fruits are still edible but will rot quicker.**

# Harvesting



# Harvesting Greens

Harvest in the morning to keep greens fresher

## 4 ways to harvest greens

1. Pick outer, larger leaves starting from bottom, one layer at a time.
  - **Don't leave stems!**
  - **Leave at least a 1/3 of plant**
2. "Cut and come again"
  - Cut a handful of leaves at the base 1-2 inches off the ground
  - Allow the plant to regrow again 2-3 more times a season.
3. Lettuce heads – Pull or cut entire head out when completely ready to harvest.
4. Loose Leaf – Harvest by thinning out closely spaced leaves first.



# Planting and Harvesting Garlic

## Planting

- Plant in the fall between Oct 1<sup>st</sup> – Nov 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Do not use grocery garlic.
- Break apart the cloves during planting.
  - Keep the papery husks on each clove
- Plant with the tips of the clove up, 2 inches deep and 4-6 inches apart.
- Mulch heavily after planting until spring

## Harvesting

### *Scapes*

- Cut scapes off in late may/early june while still young and tender - first loop.

### *Garlic*

- Harvest in late June/early july
- Harvest when bottom half of leaves are brown and top half are green.
- Leave top leaves on for curing



# Curing Plants

Some plants need to be cured after harvest for better tastes or storage

## *Sweet potatoes*

- Store in a warm (80-90 degrees) and humid space for 5-15 days.

## *Onions*

- Sundry for 1-2 days.
- Cure onions for storage by spreading onions out inside a warm and ventilated space for 2-3 weeks.
- Cure until the necks are completely dry and tight. Then trim off the roots and leaves.

## *Garlic*

- Leave the leaves on for curing.
- Hang in bunches in a dark, dry and ventilated area for 2 weeks



# How to Know When Ripe

## Watermelon

- The rind changes - bright to a dull green
- The part touching soil shifts greenish white or straw yellow to rich, creamy yellow.
- Part of stem curls and turns brown

**Other Melon indicators** –smell, fall off vine, time days of growth, color, etc.

## Eggplant

- Skin should be glossy
- When pressed slightly with a thumbnail, the indentation should remain when ripe
- Discard overripe with dull color/ hard skin

## Okra

- Look for pods that are 2-4 inches long
- Bright green, firm but tender
- 5-6 days after the appearance of flowers
- Over ripe – dull and hard – discard

## Corn

- Silks turn dry and brown

## Potatoes

- When tops have died down
- Dig carefully with a pitchfork
- Throw out any green potatoes



Ripe

Not Ripe

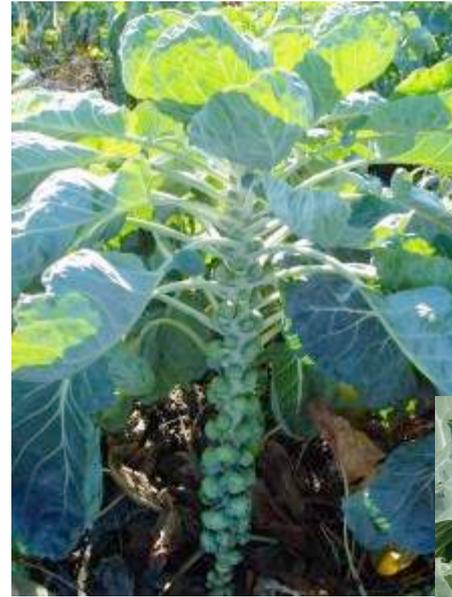


# Harvesting Broccoli and Brussels Sprouts

## Brussel Sprouts

### *Harvest individuals*

- Harvest starting from bottom by gently twisting.
- Harvest at 1-2 inches
- Harvest leaves as collards from bottom
  - Should look like a palm tree



### *Harvest all at once*

- Chop off the top of the plant above the sprouts
- All sprouts will mature evenly

## Broccoli

- Harvest central head at 6-8 inches wide, when each floret loosens apart but before it flowers and turns yellow.
- Harvest side shoots with new heads same way.
- Harvest leaves and tender stalks



# Pruning and Drying Herbs

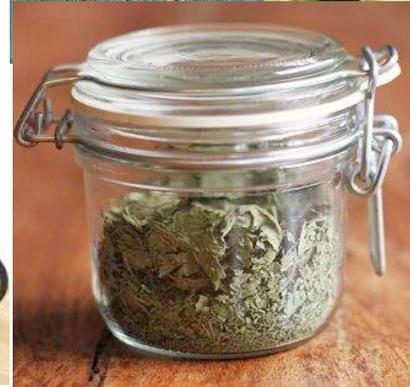
*Prune to encourage a stronger bush form and increase production.*

- Pinch off the tallest stalks back to a “Y” or two lateral leaves to encourage a bush form.
- Pinched off any summer blooms



## *Drying Herbs*

- Dry herbs to preserve them.
- Hang upside down in bunches in a dark, ventilated area for several weeks.
- Once dry strip leaves to be stored in airtight containers.
- Most herbs can be preserved also by freezing, preserving in vinegar, or used in oils.



For Further Information

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