

Plant Care

Grow babies, grow!

Planting

When to plant:

- Caring for direct sow seeds (make sure soil doesn't dry out or that it is overwatered)
- Transplanting starts
- Plant in evening
- Cloudy day
- Mild temps
- Transplant shock
- Make sure soil doesn't dry out or that it is overwatered

At the time of planting:

- Soil Conditioners:
 - Fish Emulsion (Sea Magic)
 - Soil inoculate
 - Worm castings
- Proactive pest control
 - Berry baskets
 - Milk jugs
 - Floating row covers

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Watering

- When to water
 - Morning is best
 - Water the roots, not the leaves
- How much to water
 - Deeply, less often
 - Finger rule
- Difference in gardening space (container, in-ground and raised beds)
- Mulch
 - Grass clippings (very effective, but can also slowly add nitrogen back in soil, but can also contain seeds of grass or weeds)
 - Bark (very effective, but you must move/remove when conditioning soil or replanting)
 - Fallen leaves (my favorite!)- adds back carbon to you soil and mulches very effectively and naturally
- Battling weeds (get them out before they become a problem)
- Keep your eyes peeled:
 - Watch for unhealthy plants
 - May need to remove leaves or entire plants before things spread and get out of control

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Harvesting

This is the fun part!

How do you know when to harvest:

- Every plant is a little different
- Your intuition will kick in!

Broad strokes for my favorite Fall Veggies:

- Carrots, beets and radishes: you will start to see the top of the vegetable above the soil, pull when you're ready. Harvest as needed.
- Kale and Chard: harvest outside leaves first while leaves are still tender. Harvest often or your plant will start to go to seed and quit producing leaves.
- Lettuce: Harvest once head is fully formed before plant starts to flower and while leaves are still tender.
- Broccoli: Harvest once head is fully formed before plant starts to flower. Side shoots are much smaller and harvest when desired. Use a knife or strong clippers to harvest main head. Harvest leaves for use as desired.
- Cabbage: Harvest once head is fully formed.
- Leeks: Harvest when you think they are big enough. You'll want to use a trowel to help with harvest because they go deep into the ground and are too difficult to just pull up.
- Scallions: Harvest as needed when you want to use them.
- Celery: I harvest stalks as I need them when I think they are big enough, from the outside in.
- Peas: Harvest once peas are formed to your liking and before they get too tough. Use clippers when harvesting as you could break the branch when pulling.
- Parsley: Harvest branches as needed head once they plant starts to bolt. If you want to grow another head of parsley, leave roots in the ground and only harvest the branches. Parsley is biannual and will produce an entirely second head (it will only do this once).

Be generous!

- As you start growing an abundance of food, pass along your extra to friends and family in need,
- Maybe encourage someone else to try gardening and pass along the knowledge you've learned!