

BASIL – How to Grow

Ocimum basilicum

Basil is an annual, traditional herb common to the old world. It is a very popular and versatile herb. Use it in anything containing tomatoes or tomato sauce, also for meats, fish and vegetables. (Both fresh and dried leaves are used in seasoning meat, poultry, fish, many Italian tomato and pasta dishes.) It is also used in salads, dressings and is the main ingredient in pesto sauce. Basil is wonderfully fragrant growing in the garden as well as spicy in your cooking. **Easy to grow.** Ht. 24 in. Approximately 85 days to maturity.

Days to Maturity: 85

Days to Germinate: 7-21

Planting Depth: 1/8 inch

Spacing, Row: 18 inches

Spacing, Plant: 8-10 inches

Light: Sunny Location

SOWING: Sow seeds outdoors after danger of frost has passed, in a sunny location with well drained soil. Or, for early harvest, start seed indoors 6 to 8 weeks before planting outdoors. Cover seed with 1/8 inch fine soil.

SPACING: Leave about 18 inches between rows or use in group plantings

THINNING AND TRANSPLANTING: Thin or transplant seedlings 8 to 10 inches apart when 2 inches tall. Indoors, transplant seedlings to individual pots and plant outdoors after danger of frost has passed.

HARVEST: Harvest leaves continually to encourage new growth. Use pruned leaves or harvested plants fresh or dry them in a warm, airy place. When dry, remove leaves from stems and seat leaves in an airtight jar or bottle.

SUGGESTIONS: Basil grows best in a sunny location in moist, rich, soil. Pinch back plants to encourage bushiness and discourage flowering. Basil can also be made into pesto sauce and then frozen for later use. Harvest leaves continually to encourage new growth.