

Tips for Growing Carrots:

- Work the soil deeply. Remove all rocks and stones.
- A loose soil is very important. Add plenty of compost.
- Do not add too much nitrogen fertilizer. It results in "hairy" roots.
- Water deeply.
- Thinning out seedlings is a must.

Planting Carrots: Prior to planting carrot seeds, work the soil deeply. Add liberal amounts of compost. If compost is not available, add peat moss. When growing carrots, it is important to remove any rocks, stones and debris which may impede the downward formation of the roots. When a root hits an object, forked roots will result. Carrot seeds are among the smallest, finest of garden seeds. They are very difficult to space. Sow them very thinly, about 1/4 inch deep. Cover them with a fine garden soil. Or sprinkle them on top of the soil, and lightly water them into the soil. Space rows 1 to 1 1/2 feet apart. We recommend double rows spaced 1 1/2 feet apart, and then wider rows, to afford easy access.

Broadcast sowing is also popular with carrots. With broadcast sowing, sprinkle or spread the seeds across the area you are planting. Seeds fall randomly, and do not develop in rows.

Whichever method you use, it is important to thin the seedlings before crowding impairs their growth. After the seeds have germinated, thin them out to two inches apart.

Care and Feeding of Carrot Plants: Keep carrots well weeded early in the season. They are easily overcrowded, with any competing weeds usually winning out.

While they may not show it, carrots need a good supply of water, in soil that drains well. They also respond well to fertilizer applied prior to sowing carrot seeds, and a couple of times during the season.

Do not over fertilize your carrots. Too much nitrogen in the soil, results in hairy (fine feeder roots), and misshapen carrots.

Tip: Make sure to mark the rows well, as carrots take a long time to germinate. We suggest you plant a few radishes in the rows to "mark" them. After the carrots have germinated, the radishes can be harvested.

Days to Maturity: Carrot roots are ready to pick approximately 65 to 75 days, depending upon variety.

Insects and Pests: The most common problem is the maggot stage of the Carrot fly. This 1/4 inch white maggot eats along the outside of the carrot.

Bunnies are well known to enjoy carrots. Experienced gardeners know that bunnies much prefer other crops like the leaves of beans and lettuce. Mice and moles will also nip at the tops of the carrot roots.

Disease: There are some diseases, particularly viruses, that can occasionally infest your crop. To the home gardener this is usually infrequent, except in wet weather, or poorly drained soils.

Harvesting: Begin to harvest carrots as "baby" size, thinning the row as you harvest. Once you begin picking, you can harvest as needed. After the plants have died off, the carrots do not need to be harvested right away. They can remain in the soil for weeks or more.

Hardiness: Carrots are somewhat hardy. They will withstand cold weather and a light frost.