

How to Grow Dill Herb

Annual, Anethum Graveolens

Plain and simple, when you think of Dill, you think of pickles. To a gardener, they think many more culinary uses. They also think of its attractiveness in the back border of the herb garden. While it is not the most popular of herbs, it is a very common resident in the summer herb garden. Dill, also called "Dill Weed", is native to southwest Asia. It picked up roots, and travelled the world with merchants, ages ago. Like many herbs, its popularity in the kitchen has caused it to migrate all over the world. It is a member of the Parsley family, and grows from 18 to 42 inches, depending upon variety. The most popular varieties are 24-36 inches. If your space is limited, try the smaller varieties. Put them in the back of the Herb garden as a border. Or, try them in containers on your patio or deck.

Propagation: Dill is grown from seed. Directly sow seeds into your garden in the spring. Sow seeds early in the season, and cover lightly with soil. Space seedlings to 9" apart, in rows 12 inches apart, or thin the plants out this way.

How to Grow Dill Plants: Dill is easy to grow. They prefer full sun and a well drained soil. They will do well in average soils, and tolerate dry soil conditions. Water them during dry periods, once or twice per week.

Add a general purpose fertilizer once or twice a season. The dark green leaves are called "Dill Weed". Harvest leaves at any time. The young, tender leaves are best for flavor. Harvest flower heads after seeds have formed, and the flower head has died. Tie a group of stems together and hang upside down to dry. Make sure to have a container or bag under them to catch seed. Once they are dry, shake out the remaining seeds.

Main Cooking Uses:

Dill has a refreshing aroma and delicious tang, either fresh or dried. Snip fresh leaves into soups and salads. Dill is very popular in cucumber dishes, dips and sour cream, fish and vinaigrettes.

The seeds are a must for homemade pickling. Dill seeds are also the main ingredient in curry powder.

Medicinal Applications:

Dill tea is popular for controlling flatulence. Make the tea by adding 1-2 teaspoons of dried seeds to boiling water. Let it steep for several minutes.

Chewing a few Dill seeds will freshen up your breath.

Dill has also been used for colic in children.