

# How to Grow Calendula



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Todd's Seeds, 46495,  
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Calendula's vivid orange or yellow flowers provide not only a splash of color to the garden, but add zest to salads and similar dishes as well. Calendula is exceptionally tolerant of coldweather in fall, and has long been grown as a pot herb for its edible flowers.



## Difficulty

Easy

## Season & Zone:

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade

Zone: 2-10

## Timing:

Direct sow in early spring (around the end of February on the coast), when light frost is still a possibility and continue to sow until early summer for fall flowers. Calendula is easiest from direct sowing, but can also be started indoors late February to mid-March for transplanting in April. If starting indoors, maintain darkness and a soil temperature of 21°C (70°F) until germination occurs in 6-14 days, and then supply bright light to keep seedlings compact. Or direct sow in early autumn in Zones 8-10.



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## Starting

Sow seeds 5mm (¼”) deep, and aim for a spacing of 15-45cm (6-18”) between plants

## Growing

Calendula grows easily in any regular garden soil, and thrives in a pH range of 5.5-7.0. Pinch back young plants to encourage bushy growth. Occasional feeding is rewarded, but unnecessary. Keep plants watered, but try to avoid overhead watering as plants are susceptible to mildew. Deadhead regularly to prevent self-sowing.

## How to Plant Calendula:

Low maintenance Calendula plants like rich, well drained soil, but are very tolerant of average to slightly poor soils. Improving your soil quality will produce much healthier plants and flowers, so add plenty of compost. Add a general purpose fertilizer once a month.

Once your Calendula plants are established, they should grow well, even if left unattended. Water them during dry periods, once or twice per week.

Add mulch around the plants for appearance and to keep weeds down.

Early in the summer, your plants will begin to produce large flowers on long stems. They will continually produce flowers even after the first light frost. As you pick the





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flowers for indoor arrangements, look carefully on the stem and the undersides of the leaves for aphids.

Pick dead blooms to keep the plants neat looking and to encourage new blooms. See: deadheading blooms

Calendula is a somewhat hardy annual. It will not be harmed by a light frost either in the spring or fall. It will succumb to heavy frosts or freezes.

### **Insect and Disease:**

The biggest drawback to Calendulas is that insects like them and they are subject to plant disease. Aphids are the most common insect problem. They are readily treated with an insecticidal soap or repellent. Sevin should also work well. Inspect flowers closely before bringing them indoors.

The most common disease are mildews resulting in hot, humid weather or rainy weather. Use fungicides if mildew problems arise.

