

START SEEDS

1 Do your research

Seed packets offer a wealth of information about your plants, and will tell you how soon before your last frost date to get your seeds started. Some seeds don't like being started indoors, so read carefully for terms like "direct sow!" [Online tutorials](#) from seed producers are also a great way to learn about your particular seeds.



2 Prepare Soil

We recommend a [soil blocker](#) to create an ideal environment for your new seeds. Avoid using egg cartons or other items that are too thick for roots to push through. Get [seed trays](#) that are dishwasher safe. Use a seed starting mix that is fluffier than regular potting soil.



3 Provide Light

Place your seedlings on a south facing windowsill or under a grow light; matching the light with the cycle of the day and night using a timer.



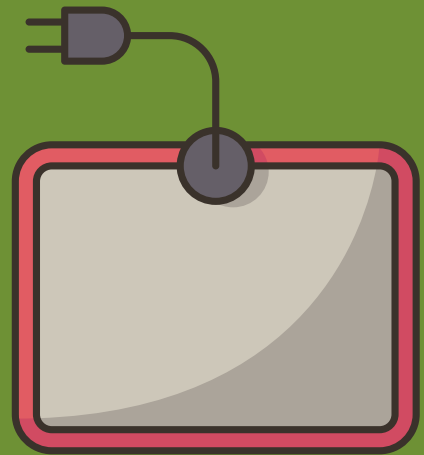


4 Watering

Your seedlings breathe partially through their roots, so don't drown them! Water enough so that soil is damp (but not soaked) every few days. Once seedlings are larger, water only enough to keep soil moist an inch under the surface to discourage fungus and flies.

5 Heat

Some seeds like tomatoes and peppers will only emerge with heat. Consider getting a heating mat or placing seedlings above another heat source for a couple hours a day. Having a plastic dome over your tray can help retain heat and moisture.



6 Hardening Off

Your indoor seedlings haven't experienced the intensity of the sun or the wind while being inside. Before they are planted in the ground, bring them outside for a little bit each day, increasing by an hour at a time, until they are spending a full day outside. Then you can plant them!

