

The background of the image is a close-up photograph of a glass of lemonade with a fresh basil leaf floating on top. Next to it is a glass jar with a lemon wedge and some thyme sprigs. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent grey rectangle.

Herbs

Easy Tips for
Growing and Cooking
with 15 Popular Herbs



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Basil

Basil is a culinary superstar that deserves a spot in every kitchen garden. It is available in dozens of varieties, each with its own distinctive traits and flavor characteristics.

Popular examples include Genovese, lemon, lime, purple, and Thai. Genovese is the most popular basil variety used in Italian dishes, while Thai basil is more common in Asian-influenced recipes.

If space allows, grow and experiment with several varieties each season!

Growing Facts & Tips:

This tender annual is very easy to grow from seed and will benefit from frequent harvesting.

Once plants reach 10-12" tall, pinch leaves from the top down to just above the second set of leaves.

This encourages the plant to grow into a nice bush form, rather than becoming tall and leggy.

Plant basil in full sun (6-8 hours per day is ideal). Provide afternoon shade in warmer regions.

Basil prefers rich, well-drained soil. Water frequently, but don't allow their feet to stay too wet.



Tips for Using & Storing Fresh Basil:

Basil is at its best fresh from the garden – Just pinch off a few leaves and you're ready to go. It is delicious with fresh tomatoes and mozzarella or tossed in with other salad greens.

For larger harvests, trim the ends of basil stems and place in a glass of water like fresh flowers. Then, place in direct sunlight. Don't store cut basil leaves in the refrigerator because they will turn brown.

Add fresh basil to your cooked dishes when you are almost finished because cooking will diminish its wonderful flavor and vibrant color.

To enjoy basil all winter long, turn basil leaves into pesto by combining with olive oil, toasted pine nuts, garlic cloves and Parmesan cheese in a food processor. Add to ice cube trays and top with a little extra olive oil. Freeze and use 1-2 cubes to add extra flavor to soups, stews and slow cooker meals.

Chamomile

Chamomile has long been treasured for its medicinal qualities.* It is known primarily for its calming, healing and soothing properties.

There are two main types of chamomile: Roman and German. Roman, aka English chamomile, is a perennial creeping ground cover with dainty daisy-like flowers. German chamomile is a re-seeding annual. It grows upright and can reach heights up to 2 feet. Otherwise, the two varieties are very similar in terms of how they are used.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Chamomile is easy to grow from seed, cuttings or by dividing established plants.

This fuss-free, forgiving plant enjoys partial shade over full sun. It also prefers dry soil, which means it is drought tolerant.

Its natural beauty makes chamomile a wonderful addition to any garden. It is also a great companion plant because it is a natural deterrent to many pests. Plants weakened by lack of water are more susceptible to pests, however.



Tips for Using & Storing Chamomile

Chamomile is commonly used to make herbal tea, essential oils and tinctures.

Chamomile tea can be made with either fresh or dried flowers. For best results, harvest chamomile flowers when the plant is totally dry. Evening is the best time, or wait until the morning dew has completely evaporated. Otherwise, mold may form during the drying process.

To harvest, either pluck the individual flower heads from the plants with your fingers or cut full stems from your plants. Allow individual flowers to dry completely on a baking sheet or some cheese cloth. Hang stems upside down in an area with good air circulation.

Once dry, remove the flower petals and discard the leaves and stems before using. Store in an air-tight container away from sunlight for future use.

**This information is for entertainment purposes only. It should not be construed as medical advice.*

Cilantro

Cilantro is a very popular culinary herb that offers International appeal. The flat parsley-like leaves add a wonderful, distinctive flavor to guacamole, salsa and other Mexican recipes, while its seeds – aka coriander seeds – can be ground into a powder or used whole in many popular Indian dishes.

Cilantro is extremely fast and easy to grow from seed. In fact, it takes only 3-4 weeks from the time the seeds are planted before you can start to enjoy this versatile culinary treasure.

Like most herbs, cilantro prefers a spot in full sun, with a little afternoon shade in hot regions. It also performs best in well-drained, moist soil. Raised beds or containers are ideal locations for cilantro and other culinary herbs as long as they receive adequate water.

Cilantro is a fast grower and will bolt, or set seeds, quickly in hot weather. To extend harvests throughout the growing season, keep reseeded your garden bed or container every 2 or 3 weeks. This will ensure you have a steady supply of fresh cilantro leaves all season long.



Tips for Using & Storing Cilantro

To harvest cilantro, cut the leafy stems almost to ground level. For healthy, strong plants leave 2/3 of the plant intact and allow it to regenerate before harvesting again.

Cilantro doesn't hold up well to the heat of cooking. Therefore, it is best added right at the end or in cold dishes like salsa or guacamole.

Cilantro is best enjoyed fresh, but it doesn't last long once cut. Cut stems placed in a jar filled with water on your counter will last about about a week. You can extend its life by placing the jar in the refrigerator with a sandwich bag placed loosely over the top of the leaves. Fresh cilantro can last up to 3 to 4 weeks using this method.

For longer term storage, freezing is recommended. Wash, dry and chop cilantro and toss with some olive oil. Spoon into ice cube trays and freeze. Store frozen cubes in freezer bags and use cubes as starters for salsa, guacamole or other recipes. Drying is not recommended because too much of the flavor is lost in the process.

Chives

Chives are a versatile herb grown for their leaves and the beautiful, edible purple flowers they yield each spring. Both the leaves and flowers impart a delicate oniony flavor to recipes.

Chives are hardy perennials that prefer full sun, but they can tolerate partial shade, as well. As with most herbs, it is a good idea to provide some afternoon shade in warmer climates.

When it comes to soil, chives are not fussy. However, for best results, plant chives in well-drained soil rich in organic material.

Like most plants, chives don't perform well when water drainage is poor. For this reason, they are ideal for container and raised bed gardens. Make sure your plants receive plenty of water until they are well established. They will also need plenty of water throughout the growing season, so be sure to keep the soil around them moist.

Chives are cold hardy to USDA zone 3, which means they will come back each spring in most areas. After 3 or 4 years, divide clumps in the spring for even more oniony goodness in your garden!



Tips for Using & Storing Chives

To harvest chives, trim the leaves down to an inch or so above the ground. The goal is to leave enough so the plant can regenerate itself. Use fresh chives on top of baked potatoes, in salad dressings, soups, or to make herb butter.

The purple flowers can be harvested as they bloom in spring. They make a colorful, tasty addition to mixed green salads or as an edible garish for a light-colored thick soup.

Chive blossom vinegar is also beautiful and delicious. To make, rinse and dry enough chive blossoms to fill a sterilized glass jar about ½ way full. Fill jar with white wine vinegar and seal with a lid. Store in a dark place for 2-3 weeks. Then, strain the liquid and discard the blossoms. Use the infused vinegar in marinades, salad dressings or on roasted veggies.

Chives are best enjoyed fresh, but they can be frozen in ice cube trays covered with water or olive oil or on their own in plastic bags with all the air removed. Freezing does not affect the taste, but the texture is damaged. As a result, thawed chives are best in soups and sauces.

Dill

Dill is an incredibly versatile culinary herb that is a must have in any kitchen garden. Nearly all parts of the plant, including its leaves, flowers, stems and seeds, can be used in your cooking adventures.

In addition, this self-seeding biennial puts on quite an ornamental display in the herb garden with its beautiful wispy leaves and delicate yellow flowers. You'll want to grow this one for sure!



Growing Facts & Tips

Dill performs best in more moderate climates because it does not do well in extreme hot or cold weather. When planting, choose a sunny, well-drained spot with rich soil and your dill plants will reward you handsomely with abundant production all season long.

Although regular dill plants reach 2-4 feet in height, the more diminutive Fearnleaf variety usually maxes out at around 18 inches. Pay attention to what varieties you select for your growing area. This will ensure your plants have adequate room to grow and reseed.

Tips for Using & Storing Dill

There are so many ways to use fresh dill straight from your garden. The feathery leaves have the least intense flavor and can be snipped right off the plant as needed to use in salads, marinades. They are also wonderful with fish and serve as a lovely, edible garnish.

Dill seeds pack the most flavor and can be used whole or ground into a powder. They are the ultimate pickling spice. Think beyond basic pickles and try them with your favorite colorful vegetables. The seeds are also wonderful in salad dressings and homemade bread.

The yellow flowers fall somewhere between the leaves and seeds in terms of flavor. Add them to pickle jars or toss in salads for a punch of color and flavor. Save stems to make broth.

Nothing beats fresh dill, but you can enjoy your bounty longer by preserving it in olive oil, vinegar, butter or by freezing in water or oil.

Echinacea

Echinacea has long been treasured for its medicinal qualities. Archeologists believe that Native Americans used Echinacea to treat illness for hundreds of years before the arrival of European settlers.

Today, Echinacea is used to improve immune function and to reduce the severity of many ailments, including the common cold, flu and upper respiratory infections

Growing Tips & Facts:

In addition to its medicinal applications, Echinacea is prized for its ornamental blooms, as well. The most common variety of Echinacea is also known as purple coneflower due to its striking petal color. However, blooms can be found in many other colors, as well.

Echinacea is an easy-to-grow perennial. It can be grown from seed, transplants or by division of established plants. It is a very hardy plant that can thrive in most conditions with very little attention.

Echinacea prefers full sun, but will also do well in light shade. In hot climates, shade yields more vibrantly colored flowers.



Tips for Using & Storing Echinacea

You can use the petals, leaves and roots of Echinacea plants to make herbal tea or tinctures, which is a medicine made by dissolving a substance in alcohol.

Harvest the leaves and flowers as soon as the flowers begin to bloom by snipping each stem right above the bottom set of leaves. Remove the flower buds and leaves, then discard the stems. Allow to dry thoroughly in an interior room. Exposure to sunlight can reduce the efficacy of Echinacea after cutting and remaining moisture can lead to mold.

Roots should be harvested in the fall after the foliage has turned brown. Hand dig the amount you need, but leave plenty for next year's growth. Wash thoroughly and allow to dry for several days on screens. Weight loss during this process is significant. Plan for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the volume to be lost.

Store dried petals, leaves and roots in an airtight container in a pantry or cupboard until ready to use.

Fennel

When it comes to fennel, there are two main types to consider: Herb fennel and the white bulb-type vegetable.

Both make wonderful additions to a kitchen garden, but our focus here is on the herb variety.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Common sweet fennel looks a lot like dill with its green feathery, wispy foliage. Other varieties of herb fennel are prized as ornamentals due to their beautiful bronze or red leaves. In mid-to-late summer, fennel puts on a modest display of delicate yellow flowers.

Fennel is short-lived, but it will reseed naturally if given an opportunity. Plants reach 3- 5 feet at maturity, so make sure you provide ample room for the varieties you select in your garden.

Fennel prefers full sun and rich, well-drained soil. It is drought tolerant, but needs ample water until it becomes established.

Position plants carefully from the beginning: Fennel does not transplant well due to its deep tap root.



Tips for Using & Story Herb Fennel

Fennel foliage can be harvested as needed by snipping off fronds. Fennel and fish make the perfect pair, regardless of how you prepare it. Just place a few fresh stalks next to the fish while it is cooking. You can also add fresh fronds to salads or soup. It can also be used as a garnish.

To collect the seeds, allow your plants to flower. Once the flowers turn brown, carefully cut the stalks and place in a paper bag upside down. Once inside, hang upside down by the stems in a cool area. Place the paper bag underneath to collect the seeds as they drop out. Once the seeds have dropped, rinse and dry thoroughly before storing in an airtight container.

Fennel seeds are often used to make sausage or in other savory dishes. They are great as a pizza topping when paired with goat cheese, thinly sliced prosciutto, fresh fig and spicy arugula.

Foliage can be frozen for use in soups and stews. It can also be air dried and stored in an airtight container for future use.

Lavender

Lavender is a strikingly beautiful culinary herb that has long been treasured for its beautiful, delicate purple blooms and wonderful, soothing fragrance.

Lavender is more than just a pretty face, however. It has also earned a respected place in the kitchen due to its delicious flavor. This is one herb that is a welcome addition to any herb garden.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Like basil, oregano, and thyme, lavender is also a member of the mint family. As with other members of this family of plants, lavender prefers a nice sunny location with very well-drained soil. Ideal growing conditions for lavender are hot and dry.

There are several cultivars available, but English lavender is the most popular. It is also the variety most used in cooking.

English lavender is actually native to the Mediterranean. It got its name because it can withstand the more wet and humid weather conditions found in that country.



Tips for Using & Storing Lavender

A good rule of thumb when cooking with lavender is to remember that a little goes a long way. Start with small amounts and slowly add more until the desired result is achieved. Adding too much at once can leave your dishes taking like potpourri.

Also, if you buy lavender (vs. grow your own), be sure to select “culinary grade” because a lot of commercially available lavender is not safe to be consumed.

You can harvest small amounts of lavender from your own garden when the plant is 2 years old. The third year and beyond will yield a much larger harvest. Use garden shears or a curved blade to cut through the tough stems.

Lavender can be enjoyed in both sweet and savory dishes. Fresh lavender looks beautiful and tastes great when tossed in salads or as a key ingredient in homemade ice cream. It can also be used in place of rosemary in breads and marinades.

You can also strip the leaves off of dried stems and then use the stems as kabobs for grilled shrimp or fruit. This will infuse the food with a lovely flavor.

Oregano

Oregano is a culinary work horse popular in Greek, Italian and Mexican cuisine. Mexican oregano is not from the same botanical family as the Greek and Italian varieties, however. It is stronger in flavor and is not an ideal substitute for the other types in recipes.

Some types of oregano are more prized for their ornamental qualities than for their culinary appeal, however. 'Kent Beauty' is one notable non-culinary variety worth inviting into your garden. This show stopper is grown primarily for its gorgeous hop-like flowers and eye-catching trailing foliage.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Greek and Italian oregano are part of the mint family, along with basil, rosemary, thyme and many other popular culinary herbs. Like its siblings, these perennial varieties prefer full sun, with some afternoon shade in hot climates. Plants will perform best in well-drained soil.

In warm climates, Oregano is evergreen. In colder areas, the plants will need some protection in the form of mulch or cold frames to survive the winter. Oregano grown in portable containers can be brought indoors for fresh flavor all year long.



Tips for Using & Storing Oregano

Oregano is one of the most popular culinary herbs for a reason. It is hard to imagine many classic Italian dishes, especially those featuring succulent tomato sauces, without its distinctive flavor.

There are a lot of ways to use fresh oregano, as well. It is delicious in baked breads or in herb butter. You can also sprinkle the leaves over mixed salad greens or add them to homemade vinaigrettes or marinades. Crush the leaves with your fingers a bit first to release more flavor.

Fresh oregano doesn't stand up well to heat, however. Add it in the last 5 to 10 minutes of cooking instead. Use dried oregano in tomato sauces, soups or stews that require longer cooking times. Keep in mind, however, that oregano is one of the few herbs that is stronger when dried than fresh, so adjust the amount you use accordingly.

Oregano can be frozen alone or in ice cube trays with water or olive oil. It can also be dried and stored in an airtight container or preserved in butter for future use.

Mint

Mint is a nearly foolproof culinary herb that is an absolute “must have” in your kitchen garden. This versatile and tough plant is a dream come true for beginning gardeners and those with a black thumb.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Mint belongs to same plant family as many other popular culinary herbs, including basil, oregano, and rosemary. Like its culinary relatives, mint prefers full sun. It enjoys a more moist soil than most, however. In fact, if you keep the soil around your mint damp, it will reward you with more strongly scented leaves.

There are many varieties of mint available, with peppermint and spearmint being two of the most popular.

Mint is an excellent companion plant because its strong scent repels ants and many other garden pests. However, it is an aggressive grower that can quickly become an invasive nuisance. To make it behave, plant mint in containers or sink large bottomless plastic containers into the ground to prevent this assertive little fellow from taking over your garden.



Tips for Using & Storing Mint

To harvest mint, simply take clippings as needed from your plants. Look for the newest growth because it is the most flavorful. Rinse leaves thoroughly and pat dry before using.

With dozens of mint varieties to choose from, there are countless ways to enjoy this versatile culinary herb. For starters, mint is a wonderful addition to ice tea and other beverages. Mint is a key ingredient in several classic cocktails: mint juleps, mojitos and gimlets. Bruise, or muddle, the leaves before adding to drinks for best results.

Mint is also a nice surprise when tossed into mixed green salads. Roll leaves and then slice into thin sections first so the flavor in each bite doesn't overwhelm the other ingredients.

Mint is a welcome addition to many desserts, as well. Try adding finely chopped mint leaves to chocolate chip cookie dough before baking. Or use fresh mint leaves to enhance homemade sorbet or ice cream recipes.

Excess mint can be frozen alone or in ice cube trays. It can also be dried and stored in an airtight container for future use.

Rosemary

Rosemary is a versatile, fragrant culinary herb native to the Mediterranean region. This popular herb is treasured for its pungent, pine-like flavor that adds a distinctive note to dishes ranging from grilled fish to beef roasts to wild game.

Rosemary is as visually appealing as it is delicious. Its woody stems allow it to be pruned into a conical Christmas tree-like shape that lends a more formal element to an otherwise unstructured, free-flowing herb garden. In cooler areas, it makes a beautiful addition to a sunny windowsill in winter.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Rosemary is a member of the mint family, along with basil, oregano, thyme and many others. Its ideal growing environment is similar to other members of this botanical family: It prefers a warm, sunny spot in well-drained soil.

This woody-stemmed plant can grow into a large evergreen shrub in hot climates, but it is not hardy in colder areas. To survive, it needs to be brought inside when temperatures drop below freezing.



Tips for Using & Storing Rosemary

There are so many wonderful ways to use rosemary to enhance your recipes. For starters, it is wonderful in marinades for meats and chicken. Strip the leaves from the woody stems and crush them with your fingers to release the oils. Combine Worcestershire sauce, olive oil, garlic and crushed rosemary to make a wonderful marinade for steaks.

You can also stuff chicken or other poultry with whole fresh rosemary sprigs, lemon wedges and cloves of garlic. Finely chopped leaves are a delicious addition to soups, stews and salad dressings.

To harvest, simply clip fresh sprigs as needed from your plants. They will keep in your refrigerator for about a week if you take more than you need.

For larger harvests, rosemary can be frozen alone or in ice cube trays with water or oil. It can also be dried or preserved in olive oil or vinegar for later use. Yet another option is to finely chop the leaves to make a delightful herb butter or seasoned salt mix.

Parsley

Parsley is easy to dismiss as little more than culinary eye candy. Sure, it's pretty to look at, but it's not very exciting.

Sadly, parsley has become a bit of a dinner plate punch line because it gets tossed mindlessly next to boring baked potatoes or uninspired hunks of meat in so many middle-of-the-road eating establishments.

As a result, few people realize that this versatile culinary herb actually tastes *good*. Parsley is one herb that definitely deserves a spot in your kitchen garden.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Parsley is easy to grow from seeds or nursery transplants. It likes plenty of sun, but it can tolerate partial shade. Parsley likes rich, moist soil, so be sure your plants receive plenty of water.

There are two main varieties of parsley: flat leaf (aka Italian parsley) and curled leaf. For the most part, the two are interchangeable. However, the flat leaf variety has a more robust flavor, while the curled variety has more tender leaves and is more often used as a garnish.



Tips for Using & Storing Parsley

Without question, fresh parsley is ideal for adding a pop of color to an otherwise boring dinner plate. Any time you want to add a bit of life and some bright, fresh flavor to a dish, simply sprinkle some finely chopped fresh leaves over your creation.

To harvest, trim fresh sprigs as needed. Cut the leafy stems from the base of the plant to encourage bushier growth.

Fresh parsley stems are perfect for making stocks, broths, soups or braises. In fact, parsley is one of the main ingredients in a classic "bouquet garni." To make your own, secure parsley stems, sprigs of fresh thyme and whole bay leaves with unwaxed kitchen string. Add to the pot while making soups, stews and broth. Bundling the herbs together in advance makes them easier to remove and discard when finished.

Parsley is best enjoyed fresh, but it can be frozen. Frozen parsley can be used in cooked dishes, but it will no longer be viable as a garnish. Avoid drying because too much of the flavor is lost in the process.

Sage

Sage has a long and varied history as a culinary herb and medicinal plant. Native to the Mediterranean region, it was revered by Ancient Romans for its healing qualities. Later, the French grew large amounts of sage for tea.

Today, sage is considered a classic ingredient in holiday stuffing and other rich dishes.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Sage is an attractive perennial in USDA zones 5 to 8. It doesn't like the extreme heat of warmer regions and won't stand up to the intense cold of northern areas.

Sage is a member of the mint family, along with basil, oregano, thyme, rosemary and many others. Like other members of this family, sage prefers full sun and light well-drained soil. It doesn't do well in heavy clay soils that holds excess water. Loose soil, raised garden beds or containers are ideal for growing sage.

With its soft, greyish green leaves, sage is a nice looking plant. It doesn't always play nicely with others, however. Sage is antagonistic to cucumbers, so don't plant them too close together. The strong flavor of sage can have an adverse affect on the fruit.



Tips for Using & Storing Sage

Sage is best known for its place at the holiday table where its distinctive flavor sets the stage for classic stuffing recipes. For many home cooks, sage's place in the kitchen ends there. So lets take a look at how this often under-utilized herb can be enjoyed all year long...

Sage pairs beautifully with foods high in fat and oil. It is often used to make sausage and other meats for this reason. Sage is also perfect with buttery pasta dishes. For a super easy and delicious meal, simply sauté fresh sage leaves in butter and toss with penne pasta, sliced grilled sausage and some freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese. Fresh sage sautéed in a browned butter sauce is also wonderful with delicate butternut squash ravioli.

Sage is best enjoyed fresh, but it can also be dried or frozen, either alone or in ice cube trays with water or oil. Fresh sage can also be preserved in butter for future use. Dried leaves can be used to infuse vinegar and honey, or used to make an herbed salt that is perfect for meat rubs.

Stevia

Stevia is native to South America where it has been used for centuries as a natural sweetener.

Stevia's popularity has grown in other parts of the world in recent decades because it offers a calorie-free alternative to regular processed sugar and other sweeteners.

If you are looking to reduce sugar consumption for your family, this is one plant you'll want to add to your herb garden.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Stevia is native to tropical regions. As a result, it is an annual in most climates. It loves warm, humid weather, but needs good air circulation to stay healthy in those conditions. It loves a nice, sunny spot with a little afternoon shade in warmer areas.

Root rot is an issue for many culinary herbs, including stevia. It does not like its feet wet, so be sure to provide loose, well-drained soil for your plants. Raised beds and containers are perfect solutions if you have dense clay or other soil that does not drain well.



Tips for Using & Storing Stevia

Stevia is up to 15 times stronger than regular cane sugar, but the amount of sweetness varies depending on growing conditions and when the leaves are harvested. Start by adding very small amounts to your drinks and recipes until you find the right balance.

To harvest, clip stems or individual leaves as needed from your plants. Use leaves either fresh or dried. Dry cuttings outside, in a food dehydrator or in the oven at 150 degrees. Discard the bitter stems once the leaves are thoroughly dried. Crumble or grind the dried leaves into a powder with a coffee grinder or food processor and store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place.

Fresh leaves are used to sweeten tea and other drinks. Powdered leaves can be used directly in recipes or to make extracts, tinctures or syrups that can be stored in a dark bottle in your refrigerator for 6 months to a year. When making any of these, do not use too high a heat because it can cause the stevia to become bitter.

Thyme

Thyme is a lovely aromatic culinary herb that is well known for its showy ornamental beauty and medicinal qualities.

This beautiful plant is prized not only for its wonderful flavor and outstanding fragrance, but also for the way it neatly frames garden beds as a border plant and spills gracefully over low walls and containers.

Growing Tips & Facts:

Thyme is a member of the mint family, along with basil, oregano, rosemary and lavender. Like other members of this family, thyme prefers full sun and needs well-drained soil to thrive.

Thyme prefers soil that is slightly more alkaline than other herbs, with a pH just above 7.0. If needed, add a little lime to the soil or limestone mulch around the plants. Use a soil testing kit for best results.

There are many varieties of thyme available. German and lemon are two well-known examples. German thyme is very aromatic and popular for culinary purposes. Lemon has a lovely citrus aroma and flavor that adds an extra pop of bright flavor to dishes.



Tips for Using & Storing Thyme

Thyme is a go-to culinary herb you will find yourself reaching for again and again. To harvest, simply clip off a few stems with garden scissors as needed. To remove leaves, hold the stems at the top and gently pull down the length with your fingers. Discard the stems or use to make stocks and broths.

Add thyme early in the cooking process so it has time to release all of its wonderful flavor. Sprinkle the fresh leaves into your pasta sauces or add them directly into soups, stews, and braises. Tie whole thyme stems together with parsley stems and a bay leaves to create a classic “bouquet garni” to season your soups and broths.

Combine fresh thyme with rosemary and sage for a wonderful marinade for grilled meat. Lightly toss potatoes, carrots or other root vegetables in a little olive oil, fresh thyme and some salt and pepper before roasting.

Thyme can be dried, frozen alone or in ice cubes with water or oil, or preserved in olive oil or butter for later use.

Tips for Drying Herbs

- 1 Harvest the herbs before they flower.
- 2 Cut the branches mid-morning. Don't harvest the entire plant at one time.
- 3 Wash them gently with some water and pat dry on paper towels.
- 4 Tie the 4-6 stems together and secure with a rubber band or something similar.
- 5 Punch several holes in a paper bag and place your bundle of herbs upside down in this bag. Gather the end of the bag together with the ends of the stems and tie it closed.
- 6 Hang this bag upside down in a warm and airy room for around 2-4 weeks. Keep checking until they're ready.
- 7 Store these dry herbs in small, airtight containers.
- 8 When you're ready to use them, crush them to get the maximum flavor.

GARDEN PLANNER

	DATE PLANTED	DATE HARVESTED YIELD
	DATE PLANTED	DATE HARVESTED YIELD
	DATE PLANTED	DATE HARVESTED YIELD
	DATE PLANTED	DATE HARVESTED YIELD



Lemon Basil Mint Spritzer

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. honey
- 1 c. water
- 1/3 c. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. fresh mint torn into pieces
- 2 tbsp. fresh basil torn into pieces
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon zest
- 2 thyme sprigs
- 2 t. ginger finely minced
- 1 large lemon thinly sliced
- 2 c. sparkling water

Directions

1. Add honey and water to a small saucepan over medium heat.
2. Stir frequently until honey dissolves.
3. Remove from heat and cool for 5-10 minutes before pouring into a pitcher.
4. Add fresh lemon juice, fresh herbs, ginger, and lemon slices.
5. Stir gently to combine and place in the refrigerator to chill.
6. Immediately before serving, pour sparkling water into pitcher and stir to combine.
7. Pour into glasses filled with ice and serve immediately

Thank you!

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