Greens & Growth!

Home & Office Microgreen Growing

Growing Process

Day 1 - 4

- Set up your container with whatever substrate you are using for your soil. Add enough water to saturate (but not drown) the soil. Sprinkle microgreen seeds evenly across the surface. Keep covered and damp (not wet) for 1-4 days. Remove cover once you see the seeds have sprouted.
- *Notes:* At this stage you do not need any light source. In nature, seeds germinate under the ground in the dark! Watch that your seeds don't start to mold. If so, start again and reduce the amount of moisture in your kit. Try sprinkling a little cinnamon which has anti-fungal properties.

Day 5 - 8

- After your seeds have sprouted, uncover the container and move your micro-garden to a sunny windowsill or place them under a grow light. Keep an eye on moisture levels. Once your microgreens are 1-3" tall, use scissors or a sharp knife to harvest them. Add to salads, sandwiches, or as a garnish on any entrée for a punch of nutrient dense flavor!
- *Notes:* Harvest only what you want to eat, if enough moisture is provided the greens should last up to 14 days!

Day 9

- Eat & Repeat!
- *Notes:* Store harvested greens 2-3 days in the refrigerator and share extras with friends!

Remember, gardening is a learning process and we are here to help you! Vermont Garden Network also has a great guide online!

Equipment

The Basics

- Container
- "Soil" substrate (soil, coconut husk, paper towel, etc.)
- Water
- Natural or ambient light
- Seeds

Optional:

- Lid for container (good to trap moisture, especially when germinating)
- Heat mat (for cold rooms and faster germination)
- Grow lights (to avoid long, leggy plants)
- Labels (to remember what your planted!)

What seeds to use?

Common microgreen seeds include broccoli and any other member of the Brassicaceae family (think radish, mustard, arugula, kale). These don't necessarily taste like their vegetable counterpart, although microgreens like mustard and radish do pack a **spicy** punch!

Other popular seeds to use as microgreens are peas (pea shoots are so **sweet** and tender), sunflower seeds, and herbs like basil and cilantro.

The only seeds **not recommended** for use as microgreens are plants in the nightshade family, which include tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and potatoes.

More About Microgreens

Gardener's Tips



- **On Temperature:** Countertop microgreen gardening is suited for rooms between 60-75°F with 75°F ideal for seed germination. If your room is closer to 60° your greens will grow faster and stronger if the container is placed on a heating mat.
- **On Water:** Moisten your soil substrate before adding the seeds. If possible when watering, add the water to the bottom or side of the container tor use a spray bottle to mist to avoid displacing the seeds depending on the size of your seeds.
- **On Soil:** While coconut husks, peat moss, or paper towels do work for small scale growing, potting soil is best (and necessary for large scale growing) because it has the nutrients needed to grow strong and healthy. Not much is needed, so shallow containers work well.
- **On Light:** Ambient and natural light is sufficient for small scale microgreen growing, but if you are looking to increase yield it could be better to have supplemental light. Place the light source at least 4-6 inches above the container. Remember that seeds germinate underground, so light should not be added until the seeds have sprouted.
- **On Harvest:** Harvest at 1-3" when the cotyledon (the primordial "leaves" before true leaves form) is fully developed. You don't need to wash the microgreens before eating if the greens are harvested above the soil line.

Why are microgreens ideal for growing indoors?

Mental and Physical Health

Growing vibrant, green, new life at home anytime of year is a wonder! This is especially true here in Vermont during the winter, when it is tough to get outside in the cold and engage with nature. Slow down and enjoy this process, watch your plants change and grow every day!

Simply viewing plants can help our mental and physical health in surprising ways. Viewing plants can reduce stress, fear, anger, and sadness as well as reduce heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension. Plants physically help us reduce pain and anxiety!

Nutrient Density

Sprouted seeds and microgreens are 2-3.5x (200-350%!) more nutrient dense than their ungerminated seed or mature leafy green or vegetable counterparts! Microgreens are rich in vitamins (like Vitamin C), minerals (like copper and zinc), and phytochemicals (like carotenoids and phenolic compounds).