



The Dinner Garden Planting Guide

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Vegetables	Minimum Germination Temperature	Ideal Germination Temperature	Maximum Germination Temperature	Plant Spacing	Seed Planting Depth	Days to Germination	Days to Harvest
Cool Weather							
Beets	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	4 inches	3/4 inch	7 to 10	60
Broccoli	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	91 F degrees	12 inches	1/2 inch	3 to 10	65
Cabbage	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	92 F degrees	12 inches	1/2 inch	3 to 10	85
Carrots	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	93 F degrees	3 inches	surface sow	10 to 15	70
Cauliflower	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	94 F degrees	12 inches	1/2 inch	3 to 10	65
Kohlrabi	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	95 F degrees	7 inches	1/2 inch	3 to 10	50
Leeks	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	96 F degrees	4 inches	1/4 inch	7 to 15	120
Lettuce	35 F degrees	70 F degrees	75 F degrees	6 inches	surface sow	5 to 10	60
Onion, green	35 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	2 inches	1/4 inch	7 to 15	45
Onions	35 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	4 inches	1/4 inch	7 to 15	110
Parsnips	35 F degrees	70 F degrees	90 F degrees	4 inches	1/2 inch	15 to 25	70
Peas	40 F degrees	70 F degrees	80 F degrees	4 inches	1 inch	5 to 15	65
Radish	40 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	2 inches	1/2 inch	3 to 10	30
Spinach	40 F degrees	70 F degrees	75 F degrees	6 inches	1/2 inch	5 to 15	40
Swiss Chard	40 F degrees	85 F degrees	95 F degrees	6 inches	1 inch	7 to 10	60
Turnips	40 F degrees	70 F degrees	80 F degrees	6 inches	1/2 inch	3 to 10	50
Warm Weather							
Amaranth	50 F degrees	80 F degrees	95 F degrees	18 inches	surface sow	3 to 10	60
Beans, Snap	55 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	6 inches	1 inch	5 to 15	60
Cantaloupe	60 F degrees	85 F degrees	90 F degrees	36 inches	1 inch	3 to 12	85
Cowpeas	55 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	6 inches	1 inch	5 to 15	60
Corn	50 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	12 inches	1 inch	5 to 10	70
Cucumbers	60 F degrees	85 F degrees	90 F degrees	12 inches	1 inch	6 to 10	55
Eggplant	60 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	12 inches	1/2 inch	7 to 14	60
Melons, America	60 F degrees	85 F degrees	90 F degrees	36 inches	1 inch	3 to 12	85
Melons, Asian	60 F degrees	90 F degrees	95 F degrees	36 inches	1 inch	3 to 12	85
Okra	80 F degrees	95 F degrees	100 F degrees	12 inches	1 inch	3 to 10	60
Peppers	60 F degrees	80 F degrees	90 F degrees	12 inches	1/2 inch	10 to 20	70
Tomatoes	50 F degrees	80 F degrees	85 F degrees	24 inches	1/2 inch	6 to 14	65
Squash, Summer	60 F degrees	90 F degrees	95 F degrees	36 inches	1 inch	3 to 12	50
Squash, Winter	60 F degrees	90 F degrees	95 F degrees	36 inches	1 inch	6 to 10	100
Watermelons	60 F degrees	90 F degrees	95 F degrees	36 inches	1 inch	3 to 12	85

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1) What is germination temperature?

a. This is the temperature at which seeds will sprout. Too hot or too cold means the seeds will either cook or lie dormant. To make sure you're within the germination temperature range for your seeds, check the soil temperature, rather than the temperature outside. The soil temperature in the early morning should not be below the minimum germination temperature. During the heat of the day, the temperature should not exceed the maximum germination temperature. You can check this temperature by sticking a thermometer in the dirt. Really, it works! You can typically count on the soil temperature being about 10 F degrees warmer than the outside temperature during the hottest part of the day with the sun out. In the early morning, the temperature of the soil will be 5 to 10 F degrees warmer than the outside temperature depending on nighttime temperatures. For example, if it's 100 F degrees outside, your soil will be about 110 F degrees. In the morning, if it's 50 F degrees outside, your soil will be around 55 F degrees. This changes when you get freezes at night, and the ground freezes. In this case, the outside temperature will be higher than your soil temperature until the sun can warm the soil.

b. When in doubt, start the seeds inside. You can control the temperature and allow the plants to establish themselves before planting them outside. This is a great method when dealing with early Spring frosts, when you aren't quite sure if the temperature will be too cold for your seeds.

2) Cool weather crops

a. Cool weather crops like colder temperatures, between 50 to 75 F degrees. They will survive frost. Some will even survive light freezes (outside temperatures no less than 30 F degrees), like beets, broccoli, cabbage, onions, lettuce, peas, radishes, turnips, carrots, and cauliflower. We've even had broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and carrots survive hard freezes, where the overnight temperature dropped to 21 F degrees. Nevertheless, regular freezes will hinder the growth of the plants or eventually kill them.

b. These crops are tender and sweet when grown in cool weather. In warm weather, they put their energy into seeding, so they become bitter and tough.

3) Warm weather crops

a. These crops need daytime temperatures above 60 F degrees, and nighttime temperatures no colder than 50 F degrees. They like temperatures between 70 to 90 F degrees. Frost will kill them, and cold wind can damage or kill them. In areas where temperatures exceed 95 F degrees regularly during the summer, plan on planting crops like summer and winter squash, melons, okra, and amaranth, as they like really hot weather. Plants like beans, corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplant, and peppers don't grow well in extremely hot weather.