

Growing Plants From Seed Is Good For The Soul

As spring blossoms so do my plans for the garden.

I consider what herbs, vegetables and flowers I will plant and where I will place them in my modest garden. What will I do differently? What new varieties will I try? I look at the photos and read the descriptions on the seed supply websites and marvel at the choice. New to my garden this year is the 'Parisian Carrot', an heirloom variety that looks like a radish.



Parisian Carrot
Daucus carota sativus 'Parisian'

Purchase: [Click Here](#)

I admit, I don't grow everything from seed. I do always grow lettuce, peas, radishes and carrots from seed directly into the garden when the soil is warm enough because they are easy to grow. A word of advice: space out the time you plant the seeds as you will certainly be eating a whole bunch of lettuce at the same time if you don't. And tomatoes and flower seed I will start indoors in March (there is still time). So why from seed?

When the seedling emerges from the soil it's like the cactus has bloomed. You awake the next morning to find a tray full of hope, of new life. And that is what happened to me last week.



You can enjoy plants that are not available in your local garden centre. A flower/herb I have grown from seed for this reason is Nicotiana. There are varieties of nicotiana with flowers that emit an intoxicating perfume only in the evening.

And it is **fun and easy to start**.

What do you need and what has worked for me to grow seeds?

- A Window with sunlight.
 - Seed Soil
 - Plants Trays (or Containers)
 - Plastic Dome Lids (or Plastic Wrap) to create a mini greenhouse
 - A Spray Bottle of water, to mist the soil.
1. Pour soil into the tray. You will want enough to fill the tray about an inch below the lip. Add water, a cup at a time, mixing in between additions until the soil is a bit moist (*not* like when you water your plants).
 2. The seed packages will give sowing instructions (how deep, how far apart).
 3. Cover the tray with the plastic dome. I have used plastic wrap before and I recommend using the domes because of the height they provide and therefore room for the seedling to continue to grow under the dome.



You will notice moisture will begin to pool on the inside of the dome as the heat rises in a day or two. From time to time, I tap the lid to release some of the water onto the soil. If the soil is drying out, use the spray bottle of water to mist it.

Watch your babies grow. When they are close to the height of the lid, I start to remove the dome for periods during the day so that by the time they are ready for the next step they are out of the 'sauna'.

At maturity (ie. they have outgrown the tray and it is near the end of May) you will need to harden off the plants - basically, preparing them for their new life outdoors. It is over a week or so of taken them outdoors into a warm shady spot (no lid) and bringing them in at night. Use your judgement and intuition. It is a process of getting to know the plants, the weather and your green thumb. Lastly, take the leap and give them a new home in your outdoor garden.

A couple of personal thoughts about seed choices. Nasturtiums are very easy to grow. They have a good size seed and all you need to do is push it into the ground and let it do its thing. It is hardy, edible and beautiful. Heritage lettuce with a combination of varieties in the package is a great choice and gratefully, I haven't had issues with the insects eating it before I do. Try something new, it is another path to learning about how our plants grow and making us happy.

A couple of local seed suppliers I have purchased from:

<https://www.damseeds.com/>

They are fulfilling orders now, delivery is delayed. So ordering now is a good idea.

www.richters.com

Highly recommend a trip to Richters, near Stouffville when we are reconnected. A great spot for the gardener in all of us, especially if you want to know about herbs. The website has past lectures available for viewing and a video on starting from seed.

As it is, the internet is full of information for starting from seed. This link offers a good and quick guideline.

<https://www.gardeners.com/how-to/how-to-start-seeds/5062.html>

You can order soil from Home Depot, curb side pickup and a visit to the local dollar store should still have seed planting trays and seeds too.

Happy seeding!

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