

MICROGREENS

Sow Often, Sow Awesome, Sooo E-A-S-Y!

Are these tiny plants the new 'foodie' rage for gardeners, chefs and nutritionists? It may be a new idea to some, but eating tiny greens as a flavorful garnish or crunchy topping has been around for years. These are not sprouts – they are seedlings (stem, cotyledons, and first true-leaves; no root or seed coat) of edible vegetables, herbs and flowers. Easy to grow in just a few days from seed, studies have shown the leaves can have 4-40 times the nutritional value of the same mature vegetable.

- Start with any shallow container. One with drainage is important. Choose anything from a standard seed starting tray to a recycled salad container from the market to an old brownie pan; or be creative!
- Fill the container with moistened seed starting mix; not potting soil or soil from the garden. If the mix has large pieces of sticks or perlite, you may want to sift it. Smooth and lightly firm the soil.
- Sow the seeds by scattering them evenly over the soil. You can sow seeds to be grown as micro-greens thickly – even seed touching seed. One variety or mix and match.
- Some people prefer to cover the seeds with a dusting of soil mix; others prefer to leave the seed uncovered and just water the seeds in. One recommended method is to cover the seeds with a paper towel and water the seeds right through the towel. It's convenient, inexpensive, encourages the seeds to remain in contact with the soil and protects them until they are fully rooted into the soil. A paper towel is light enough for the newly sprouted seedlings to push up as they grow and doesn't interfere with the germination process.
- No matter what 'covering method' you choose, water the seeds into the soil gently from the top with a sprinkler or the 'rose' nozzle of a watering can. The seeds must not be allowed to dry out, so watering daily (or sometimes twice daily) is necessary. Using a plastic greenhouse cover can also aid in keeping the seed moist. Each watering should be a gentle shower, so as not to disturb the seed or knock the new seedlings over. If using the paper towel method, continue to allow the seeds to grow until they have rooted into the soil and pushed the paper towel up before removing it.



- Most seeds do not need light to germinate, but as soon as those little green shoots start to appear, place the tray in a bright sunny window. If the weather permits, you can grow your micro-greens outside. If adequate light is not available, grow lights are an option.
- Remove the paper towel (add it to your compost pile) and any plastic greenhouse cover as soon as the majority of the seeds have rooted. Do not leave any greenhouse covers on once the tray has been moved into the sun; these little seedlings can quickly become overheated and die.
- Over the next 5-15 days the greens will continue to grow and thrive as long as they have sufficient light and water. If the tiny plants are reaching for the light in one direction, turn the tray daily. Since the growing containers are shallow, daily watering is still required unless they are set up onto a self-watering tray.
- Microgreens are harvested when they are 2-3" tall, have a stem and only the seed leaves (cotyledons) are fully developed (except pea shoots/tendrils; see notes on back). Don't wait too long; once these seedlings start to grow true leaves, they start to require more care, spacing, and fertilizing or they will become stressed.
- Most micro-greens are a single cutting (except for Pea Tendrils). Cut them with scissors just above the soil. Newly harvested micro-greens are wonderful, but they can also be stored in a plastic bag filled with air for a few days in a refrigerator.
- Snip and Enjoy!



Variety	Description	Taste	Days to Germinate	Days To Harvest (after Germ.)	Growing Notes
Amaranthus (Red)	red stem, maroon cotyledons	mild-earthy	2-3	8-12	warm soil
Gem Marigolds	pale stem, green cotyledons & leaves	citrus	7-10	12-20	warm soil, grow to first true leaves
Nasturtiums	green stem with large green cotyledons	peppery	6-8	10-18	cover seed with soil, can allow to grow first true leaves
Sunflowers (small hulled)	green stem with large green cotyledons	slightly nutty	8-10	15-20	soak seed, warm soil, harvest when hulls are shed
Beet	purple stem, green/purple cotyledons	sweet-earthy	5-7	12-15	soak seed for 24 hrs, warm soil
Broccoli	pale stem, green cotyledons	cabbage	3-4	6-8	
Cabbage (purple)	purple stem, purple veined green cotyledons	cabbage	3-5	6-9	
Chard	red/yellow stems, green cotyledons	beet like	5-7	10-15	soak seed for 24 hrs, warm soil
Celery (cutting type)	green stem/leaves	celery	5-7	15-20	grow to first true leaves
Chicory (garnet)	red stem, green cotyledons	bitter sweet	5-7	7-12	
Endive	pale stem green leaves	lightly bitter	3-5	8-15	cool soil, grow to first true leaves
Hong Vit	purple stems, green cotyledons	mild radish	3-5	6-10	
Kale	green or purple stem/cotyledons	mildly bitter	3-5	6-12	
Kohlrabi (purple)	purple stem, green cotyledons	mild cabbage	3-5	6-9	
Komatsunan (red)	purple stem, purple cotyledons/green under	mild spicy	4-6	10-15	can grow to first true leaves
Onion (He-Shi-Ko)	green thread like green leaves	onion	5-7	10-20	
Lettuce	pale stems/various color cotyledons	mild	5-8	12-20	cool soil, grow to first true leaves
Mustard (reds)	pale stem, red cotyledons & leaves	mildly spicy	3-5	7-12	can grow to first true leaves
Pac Choi (red)	pale stem, red cotyledons & vined leaves	sweet	3-5	8-12	more direct sun = deeper red
Peas	pale stems green leaves	pea like, sweet	3-5	8-15	cover seed w/soil, allow 3 leaf sets to mature, 2 cuttings
Radish	pink stem, green or purple cotyledons	spicy	3-4	6-10	Sango (purple), Watermelon and Trident (pink)
Spinach	pale stem green cotyledons	slightly nutty	5-7	12-15	cover seed with soil
Wheat	green thread like leaves	green tea	10-12	15-30	
Anise	pale stem, green cotyledons	licorice	5-8	12-15	
Arugula	pale stem, green cotyledons	nutty/peppery	2-3	5-7	
Basil	green or purple stem/leaves	basil	4-5	14-21	warm soil, allow first true leaves
Cilantro	pale stem, green cotyledons & leaves	strong cilantro	5-8	10-18	grow to first true leaves
Chervil	pale stem, green cotyledons & leaves	mild anise	7-10	15-20	grow to first true leaves
Cress	green stem/leaves	peppery - spicy	2-3	8-12	leave towel an extra day or 2
Dill	pale stems, green cotyledons	dill	5-8	12-15	grow to first true leaves
Fennel	pale or bronze stems/leaves	licorice	6-10	15-20	grow to first true leaves
Sorrel (Green/Red Veined)	green stem & cotyledons w/purple veins	citrus	6-10	15-20	warm soil, can grow to first true leaves
Summer Savory	green	mild spicy	8-10	15-20	can grow to first true leaves