

Sprouting

Sprouts are quite simply the tender shoots of germinating seed. They are packed with protein, vitamins, enzymes and minerals. They are very easy to grow and can provide a valuable addition to any diet. Lovely in salads, sandwiches or stir-fries.

What seeds can I sprout?

Most seeds, peas, beans, grains and nuts can be sprouted. You should always use seeds from a reputable source, preferably organic. They should be viable seed suitable for sprouting.

What equipment do I need?

You can sprout seeds in a jar with a ventilated mesh lid, in a muslin bag or in a sprouter. Consider where you are going to put the sprouter - sprouts like a light airy place away from a heat source. The kitchen windowsill or worktop is ideal. You also need to have access to clean fresh water for rinsing.



Getting started

- You will need about two teaspoons of small seeds or a tablespoon of the larger ones. The finished sprouts occupy a lot of volume so sprouting less is better to begin with.
- Check your seed for any debris that shouldn't be there, especially small stones.
- Rinse thoroughly then soak overnight in clean fresh water.
- Drain and rinse again the following morning then put the soaked seed in your sprouting tray or jar.
- The seeds should be rinsed and drained at least once a day.
- After one or two days (depending on temperature and seed size) you will start to see small sprouts emerging.
- Sprouts (again depending on temperature and seed size) should be ready to eat in about 4/7 days.
- Sprouts are best eaten when small and delicate. Experiment with what you like best.
- You can have several different sprouts on the go at once. To ensure a regular supply soak and sprout successively.
- Rinsed and drained sprouts can be stored in the fridge for up to a week, so if time is short you could just do one batch a week and store them in the fridge to eat as you need.

Trouble shooting

- Sprouts must be well drained. The most common cause of failure is sprouts sitting in a puddle of water.
- Sprouts like good air circulation so don't put the sprouter in a cupboard.
- Keep the sprouter clean for best results.

Microgreens

They are similar to sprouts, but require soil and sunlight (or a grow light) to grow. As the name suggests, microgreens are just miniature plants of greens, herbs or other vegetables. Like sprouts, they are a concentrated nutrient source and packed with beneficial enzymes because of their rapid growth.



Though they are often seen in dishes at gourmet restaurants because of their delicate flavour and sophisticated presentation, they are simple to grow on your own and cost very little once you have the supplies. With the right tools, you can have a year-round vegetable source on your kitchen counter.

What equipment do I need?

Good quality organic seed compost is essential. You will also need trays of some sort – either seed trays or small containers.

Getting started

- Soak the seeds for 6-12 hours. Rinse and drain well.
- Sprinkle the soaked seeds over a tray of compost and press down gently.
- Use more seeds than you would normally to ensure a good crop of leaves.
- Cover with a fine layer of compost.
- Keep compost moist (but not soaking). Should see signs of germination after about 6 days.
- Best kept at a steady temperature of about 20°C
- Cut after about two weeks, or when you are happy with your crop!

