



SEEDS

Socio-Economic & Environmental Development Solutions

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Dill is a very tall, hardy herb plant, that will grow as an annual in most gardening climates. However, with the right conditions, seed heads that are left to mature will reseed in your herb garden's dill patch and grow in the following gardening season. Grow this herb in your garden for its leaves and its seeds. Dill is also a good choice for growing in a [container garden](#).

Gardening Tips for Growing Dill - Dill will grow to be very tall (about 36" on average, depending upon the variety), so place in a location where it won't block sunshine from other plants in your herb garden. Also, since it is so tall, it is susceptible to damage from strong winds. Try to provide it shelter from wind, if possible.

Dill leaves are traditionally used to season fish dishes and potato salads. In some countries, dill is used as

a garnish (like we use parsley). It's a favorite for flavoring sauces, sour cream, pickles and vegetables. The seeds have a taste more like caraway.

Dill is a carminative, aromatic, anti-spasmodic, galactagogue. Dill seeds contain volatile oils that are believed to calm an upset stomach, reduce flatulence, ease heartburn and soothe colic. Dill leaves have an anti-foaming property. Dill is also rich in chlorophyll, which makes it an effective herb in treating bad breath.

In the olden days, water steeped with dill was a popular treatment for babies and children with colic. Also, nursing mothers ate this herb which was reputed to promote the flow of milk. Dill seeds were known as "meeting house" seeds. They were chewed to keep hunger pains at bay during long church services or meetings (which were frequently followed with community pot-lucks!).



How to Grow Dill - Climate & Growing Conditions

Dill will grow best in a sunny spot with some shelter from the wind. You may also want to factor for companion planting considerations, when picking the location for your dill patch. For more information on growing dill using [companion gardening](#).

How to Grow Dill - Preparing the

Garden Soil

Growing Dill is normally successful in common garden soil. For optimal growing conditions, the soil needs to be deeply dug however. This herb has long roots that need plenty of room to grow. The deeper the root can grow, the better your dill patch will be able to survive wind and storms. Mix [compost](#) and bonemeal into to your herb patch a few weeks before planting.

How to Grow Dill - Planting

Dill seed germinates quickly. Plant this herb in the spring. Cover the seed lightly with soil, and moisten the garden bed. You should see sprouts growing within about two weeks. After they've sprouted, thin the plants to 12" apart.

Extend your harvest by planting an additional crop every few weeks.

Gardening Tips for Growing Dill - Don't plant dill near carrots or cabbages, they don't grow well together (see [companion planting guide](#)). Dill planted near onions can be beneficial though.

How to Grow Dill - Watering

Periodic waterings should be enough, unless you're experiencing a dry spell (in which case, water frequently). As this plant has deep roots, deep watering with a drip/irrigation system is best.

How to Grow Dill - Challenges

Growing dill is pretty easy, with very few challenges. Be sure to keep the herb bed weed-free, using care not to disturb the dill plant roots when weeding.



photo

courtesy of the Hajiceks, MO

How to Grow Dill - Harvesting

The leaves can be harvested as needed from the plant throughout the growing season.

Gardening Tips for Growing Dill - Leaf production stops when the flowers appear.

If planning to harvest only the leaves (and not the seed heads), cut the herb down to about 2" from the ground once you see the flower head start to form. (It may regrow.) You can keep the cuttings in the fridge for several weeks.

Collect the seeds after they've ripened (when they turn brown). Cut off the flower heads, leaving a bit of stem attached to the flower head. Bunch a few of the flower stems together. Place a paper bag over the flower heads and secure to the stem bunch. Hang upside down in a warm, airy space to dry. (The bag catches any seeds that dislodge from the flower heads.) To harvest once the seeds are dry, shake the bundle to further dislodge the remaining seeds and separate the seeds from the debris.

Storage

[*See: How to Dehydrate Herbs - Dill*](#)