



Fort Bend County Master Gardeners

Fort Bend County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who assist Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in educating the community using research-based horticultural information.

HOW TO GROW HERBS

You don't need a lot of space to grow herbs. Choose your favorite herbs and plant them in raised beds or in containers. You can even grow many herbs indoors, such as Basil, Chives, Rosemary, Parsley and Mint. Just put them near a window with bright light.

Herbs can be **annual**, **biennial**, or **perennial**. Annuals complete their life cycle in one year, biennials generally grow the first year and then flower and fruit the second year before they die, and perennials return year after year.

The most important factor for growing herbs is that they have **good drainage!** 8-12 inches of loose soil is recommended.

LOCATION

Determine how much sun each herb requires before planting. In our hot Texas summers, many herbs benefit from some shade in the afternoon.

IN RAISED BEDS

When you plant herbs in the ground, it's best to raise the level of your plantings above the rest of the area to promote good drainage, either with or without a border. Work compost into the soil before planting. A couple inches of mulch on top of the soil will help retain moisture and also help keep the weed seeds from germinating.

IN CONTAINERS

Planting herbs in containers makes it easier to control drainage. Top the soil with a little mulch in containers, too.

NUTRIENTS

The best fertilizers are finished compost, slow-release balanced fertilizer, or liquid fertilizer. Put some compost in the hole where you're planting. Add compost or slow-release fertilizer twice a year to herbs that are planted in the ground, and more often if herbs are planted in containers ("top dress").

PESTS

If you have good growing conditions for your herbs, including keeping the area weed-free, there won't be many harmful insects. For harmful pests on your plants, you can:

- Wash off bugs with a hose
- Use insecticidal soap
- Avoid chemical pesticide!

HARVESTING

Most herbs need to be harvested or pruned to keep production going. Cut just above a set of leaves and prune gently to avoid excessive leaf drop which damages the plant.

USING CULINARY HERBS

Herbs can be used fresh or dried and stored in air-tight containers. When dried, herbs usually last about one year if kept out of heat and sunlight. Herbs can also be frozen.

For more information, check out www.aggie-horticulture.

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HERBS FOR FORT BEND									
	A = Annual; B = Biennial; P = Perennial; E = Evergreen; TP = Tender Perennial								
Herb	Habit	Sun		Water			Size	Season	Culinary Uses
		Full Sun	Part Shade	Min	Ave.	Freq.	W x H		
Basil	A	X			X		1.5 X 2	WARM	Salads, vegetables, oils
Bay	E	X	X		X		5 X 10		Flavors food & tea
Chamomile	A	X	X		X	X	2.5 X 2		Tea
Catnip	P	X	X		X		3 X 2		Tea
Chili Petin	TP	X	X		X		2X2		
Chives (Onion)	P/E	X	X		X		.5 X 1		Salads, soups, potatoes
Coriander (Cilantro)	A	X	X		X		1 X 2	COOL	Salads, meats, raw seeds
Dill	A	X			X		1 X 3	COOL	Salads, bread, potatoes, soup
Fennel	A or TP	X	X		X		2 X 4		Salads, fish, broth
Garlic	P	X			X		1 X 3		Vegetables, meat, sauce, soup
Garlic Chives	P	X	X		X		.5 X 1		Salads, soups, potatoes
Ginger	P	X			X		1 X 2+		Tea, vegetables, meat
Horseradish	P	X			X		2 X 2		Salads, sauce
Lemon Balm	P	X	X		X		1 X 3		Tea, desserts, vinegars
Lemon Grass	P	X			X		3 X 3		Tea, salads, stir-fry
Lemon Verbena	P	X			X		2 X 4		Tea, meat, jelly, desserts
Marjoram	E	X			X		3 X 1		Salads, vegetables, meat, egg
Mexican Mint Marigold	P/E	X			X		1 X 2		Salads, meat, poultry, fish
Mint	P/E	X	X		X	X	3 X 1		Tea, salads, desserts
Oregano	E	X	X		X		1 X 2		Tea, sauce
Parsley	B	X	X		X		2 X 1		Salads, vegetables, soups
Parsley, Flat Leaf	B	X	X		X		2 X 2		Salads, vegetables, soups
Rosemary (upright)	E	X	X		X		2+ X 3		Tea, meat, bread, vinegars

Sage	P or A	X		X			2 X 3		Vegetables, meat, potatoes
Salad Burnet	P	X			X		2 X 2		Salads, vegetables, vinegars
Savory, Winter	E	X			X		3 X 1		Vegetables, beans, poultry
Sorrel	P	X	X		X		2 X 2	COOL	Salads, soups, sandwiches
Stevia	A	X	X		X		2 X 2		Sugar substitute
Thyme	E	X		X			2 X 1		Tea, oils, meats