



Indoor Seed Sowing Dates

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OH89

Starting seedlings of annual flowers and vegetables indoors has several advantages :

- the fun of watching your own plants grow from seed, getting a jump on spring
- the ability to grow more unusual and different varieties than you often find in retail outlets
- saving money
- using washed and recycled containers from year's prior, helping the environment
- the ability, especially in northern climates, of getting a jump on the season, extending it by several weeks by planting more mature plants than sowing seeds directly
- starting seedlings that are difficult to sow direct and have survive, especially slow-growing ones

Culture :

- Use a sowing mix for starting seeds, not garden soil. Those that do not transplant well should be sown in peat pots (indicated in table).
- Sow at a depth of about twice the diameter of the seed; very small seeds can be sprinkled on the surface and allowed to settle in when the container is gently tapped on the sides.
- Keep gently watered, as with a water breaker ("rose") on a watering can. Don't allow to dry out, and don't keep too wet. Be sure to use lukewarm water, especially in the north.
- Sow in individual cells, or in rows in a flat. This way if a disease starts it won't spread too far before you can remove the affected plants and soil. The main disease to watch for is "damping-off", often caused by seedlings staying too wet. Seedlings rot at the base, toppling over quickly.
- Keep in bright light. You may grow under fluorescent lamps for much of the seedling and young plant growth. Use alternating cool and warm white tubes, in a couple of light fixtures side by side over flats. Keep 4 to 6 inches above tops of plants. Hanging fixtures on chains makes it easy to raise them as plants grow. Keep lights on 14 to 16 hours a day, such as on a timer. New thin inner energy-efficient tubes are effective and save energy.
- Most seedlings light bottom heat, as from seedling heating mats.
- Once seedlings start developing leaves, lightly fertilize them, such as with 1/2 strength liquid fertilizer. Be aware that many organic liquid fish or seaweed fertilizer may have an undesirable odor indoors.

Dates:

- The following **weeks** are approximate from **time of sowing to planting outside**, not merely germination times which is what is usually seen in catalogs and on seed packets. Generally those taking more weeks to produce a plant require more days to germinate. So if 6 weeks, and you want to plant outside the end of May, sow mid-April. Weeks may vary slightly depending on variety/ cultivar, conditions, and location.

--Two weeks are often given for packs, the first being the minimum to sow indoors and have a plant suitable for planting outside, the second to have a plant almost or in bloom under ideal conditions (high light, warmth, as in a hobby greenhouse or sunroom). If you will grow mainly under lights, or under average home conditions, it may be best to aim for the fewer weeks. Seedlings grown too long indoors with improper balance of heat and light (too warm, too little light) often get spindly.

--Weeks are for sowing in a cell-pack. If sowing in these or flats, to transplant into a 4-inch pot for growing further prior to planting outside, add 2 weeks.

--Generally these times are for growing seedlings around 65F air temperature. If growing colder add a week, if growing warmer subtract a week. So if 8 weeks is listed, figure 9 weeks if growing at 55-60F, or 7 weeks if growing at 65-70F.

--Light or darkness is sometime seen as needed for seeds to germinate, however generally sowing at the proper depth will give the correct light.

--Many vegetables often just sown outdoors are so marked (o).

--**Ease** refers to Easy, Moderately easy, or Difficult to grow from seeds.

--**Temperature** (temp.) is ideal from growing seedlings once germinated, W (warm, 65-75F) or C (cool, 55-65F). If none given, aim for around 65-68F air temperature. Plants usually will grow at less than the ideal, just perhaps slower.

--Some seeds and plants may be poisonous to various degrees, harmful to toxic, if ingested with several so noted. If unknown, don't ingest and keep from children.

--Most listed flowers are annuals or biennials. For more perennials and their sowing needs see perrysperennials. info.

Flower	weeks		ease	temp.	needs, comments
	pack	pot			
Agastache	10	12	E		
Ageratum	6-9	11	E		
Agrostemma	8	10	E		poisonous
Alonsoa	10	12	M		
Alternanthera	8	10	E		
Alyssum (annual), sweet (Lobularia)	4-6	8	E	C	
Amaranthus	3-4	6	E		
Ammobium	10	12	E		
Anagallis	10	12	M		
Angelonia	8	10	E		
Aquilegia, Columbine	8-12	14	E		prechill seeds prior to sowing, poisonous
Arctotis	6	8	E		
Aster (annual)	6	8	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Balsam (impatiens)	6	8	E		
Begonia, wax	10-22	24	M		
Bells of Ireland (Moluchella)	8	10	M	C	prechill, alternating day/night temperatures help
Berlandiera	7	9	M		
Bidens	7	9	E		
Brachyscome	6	8	M		Blooms 80 days from sowing

Browallia	6-12	14	M		
Calandrina	7	9	M		
Calendula	4	6	E	C	
Callistephus (China aster)	6	8	E		
Campanula	6-18	20	M		
Canna	10	12	E	W	soak seeds overnight before sowing
Canterbury Bells	10	12	E		
Carnation	10	12	E	C	
Carpanthea	7-8	10	E		
Castor Bean	2	4	E	W	often sown outdoors when warm, poisonous
Celosia	4-8	10	E	W	
Centaurea (Bachelor's button)	4	6	E	C	Sow in peat pots or direct seed
Cerinthe	10	12	E		
Chaenarrhinum	14	16	E		
Cladanthus	6	8	E		
Clarkia	7	9	E		Sow in peat pots or direct seed
Cleome	4-8	10	E	W	
Cliaanthus	10	12	D		
Coleus (Solenostemon)	6-10	12	E	W	
Convolvulus	4	6	E		poisonous, prior soaking aids
Coreopsis	6-7	9	E		
Cornflower	4	6	E		
Cosmidium	4	6	E		
Cosmos	4	6	E		Easy to direct sow outdoors
Crepis	9	11	E		
Cuphea	10	12	E	W	
Cynoglossum (Chinese forget me not)	6	8	E		
Dahlia	4-9	11	E	C	
Dianthus	6-10	12	E	C	
Diascia	8	10	E		
Dicondra	6-10	12	E		
Digitalis	8	10	E	C	poisonous
Dimorphotheca	4-8	10	E		seeds not long-lived
Dolichos	3	5	E	W	
Dusty Miller	8-10	12	E		
Echium	6	8	E		poisonous
Eschscholzia	7	9	M		Sow in peat pots or direct seed

Eustoma, Lisianthus	14-18	20	D		
Felicia	7	9	M	C	
Fuchsia	10	12	M	W	
Gaillardia	4-8	10	E		
Gaura	8-10	12	E		
Gazania	10	12	E	C	
Geranium (Pelargonium)	10	12	E		
Gilia	7	9	M		
Godetia	6	8	M		
Gomphrena	6-7	9	E	W	
Gypsophila	8	10	E	C	
Helenium	10	12	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Helianthus	2	4	E		
Helichrysum	6-8	10	E		
Heliotrope	10	12	M		
Hesperis	4	6	E		
Hollyhock	6	8	E		
Ice Plant	8	10	M		
Impatiens	8-10	12	E		
Ipomopsis	8	10	M		
Kochia	4	6	E	W	May sow in peat pots
Larkspur (Consolida)	6-8	10	E	C	Poisonous, sow in peat pots
Laurentia	7	9	M		
Lavatera	6-8	10	E		
Legousia	7	9	M		
Leonotus	8	10	E		
Limnanthes	10	12	E		
Limonium	8-12	14	E		
Linanthus	7	9	E		
Linaria	10	12	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Linum	8	10	E		poisonous
Lobelia	9-10	12	E	C	Poisonous, germinates slowly
Lupinus	8	10	E		soak seeds overnight before sowing, poisonous
Lychnis	8	10	E		
Malcolmia	7	9	M		
Malva	8	10	E		poisonous
Marigold, French	6	8	E		Easy to direct seed

Marigold, African/American	8	10	E		
Melampodium	7-8	10	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Millet, Ornamental	8	10	E		
Mirabilis, Four O'clock	4-6	8	E		poisonous
Morning Glory (Ipomoea)	2	4	E	W	poisonous
Myosotis	4	6	E		
Nasturtium (Tropaeolum)	4	6	E		Sow in peat pot or direct seed
Nemesia	4-7	9	E	C	
Nemophila	8	10	M	C	
Nepeta	7	9	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Nicotiana	6	8	E		poisonous
Nierembergia	10	12	M		
Nigella	4-10	12	E		Sow in peat pots or direct seed
Nolana	10	12	M		
Osteospermum	10	12	E		
Oxypetalum	10	12	M		
Pansy, Viola	14	16	E	C	
Papaver (poppy)	6	8	M		Poisonous, direct seed as transplants poorly
Penstemon	7	9	M		alternating day/night temperatures help
Pentas	12	14	M		alternating day/night temperatures help
Pepper, Ornamental	6-10	12	E		
Petunia	8-10	12	E	W	
Phacelia	6	8	E		
Phlox, annual	6-8	10	E	C	
Portulaca	6	8	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Reseda (Mignonette)	6	8	E		Sow in peat pots or direct seed
Rudbeckia	6-8	10	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Salpiglossis	8-9	12	E	C	
Salvia, scarlet	6-8	10	E		alternating day/night temperatures help
Salvia, mealycup	8-10	12	E		
Sanvitalia	6	8	E		
Scabiosa	4-8	10	E	C	
Schizanthus	8-10	12	E		
Silene	6	8	E		
Snapdragon	6-10	12	E	C	
Spaeralcea	8	10	D		
Spilanthes	10	12	E		

Steirodiscus	7	9	M		
Stocks	6-8	10	E	C	
Sunflower	2	4	E		
Sweet Pea	4	6	E		sow in peat pots, p oisonous, soak seeds prior
Sweet William	6	8	E	C	
Talinum	6-10	12	E		
Thunbergia	6-8	10	E		may sow in peat p ots
Tithonia	6	8	E		
Torenia	10-12	14	M		alternat ing day/night temperatures help
Tracelium	10	12	E		
Trachymene	6-8	10	E		
Verbascum	10	12	E		alternat ing day/night tempera tures help
Verbena	10	12	M	W	
Vinca, annual (Catharanthus)	10-12	14	E	W	poisonous
Wahlenbergia	7	9	E		
Zinnia	4	6	E	W	Doubles may become single if transplanted
Vegetables, herbs					
Artichoke	6-8	10	M		
Basil	4-6	8	E		
Beans (o)	2	4	E	W	sow in peat pots, o utdoors whe n warm
Beets (o)	5	7	E		soak seeds overnight before sowing
Borage	2	4	E		sow in peat pots
Broccoli	5	7	E		
Brussels Sprouts	5	7	E		
Cabbage, Kale	5	7	E	C	
Carrot (o)	5	7	E		sow out doors
Cauliflower	5	7	E		
Chives	5	7	E	E	
Corn, Sweet (o)	2	4	E		sow out doors when warm
Cucumber (o)	3	5	E	W	sow out doors when warm
Dill (o)	7	9	E		
Eggplant	7	9	E	W	
Gourd, orna mental (o)	3	5	E		sow out doors when warm
Lavender	10	12	E		
Lettuce (o)	4	6	E		some vars. require light to germi nate
Melons (o)	4	6	E	W	sow in peat pots, o utdoors whe n warm

Onion	5	7	E	C	
Oregano	5	7	E		
Parsley (o)	8	10	E		
Pea, sweet	2	4	E		generally not sown indoors
Pepper	7	9	E		
Sage	4	6	E		
Spinach	4	6	E		best sown outdoors
Squash (o)	2	4	E		sow in peat pots, outdoors when warm
Summer Savory	4	6	E		
Sweet Marjoram	5	7	E		
Swiss Chard	6	8	E		
Thyme	5	7	E		
Tomatoes	5-7	9	E		

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