



The Gardener's Workshop

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Getting Started from Seed: A Simple Success!

With Lisa Ziegler

Reasons to start your own seeds:

- Cost effectiveness
- Selection
- Plant quality
- Organic method
- Rare and unusual varieties
- Cut Flower varieties
- In-season selection

Lisa's seed groupings:

1. **Indoor** - this group prefers to be started inside where conditions are controlled.
2. **Outdoor** - this group prefers going straight into the ground where they will not be disturbed and temperatures vary.
3. **Indoor/Outdoor** - this group can go either way!

Why "Soil Block" to start your seeds?

- Earlier harvest
- No transplant shock
- Start many plants in small space
- Plant thinning is eliminated
- Consistently works
- Easy to do
- Economical
- No clutter of containers to store
- For complete blocking instructions, visit our online Learning Center

Tips to successfully start seeds indoors:

- Do not start too early
- Start with fresh seed
- Use bottom heat for germination
- Provide 16 hours of artificial light once seeds have sprouted
- Begin to feed with organic liquid fertilizer when first leaves develop
- Move to garden as soon as weather permits

Planting seeds directly in the ground:

- Using a trowel or your hand, draw a line in the bed or make depressions in the soil with your hand in a grouping pattern to plant your seeds in. This line or depression is shaped similar to a "V" like a trough that is approximately 1-2" deep. The seeds will be planted at the bottom of the "V" trough. This helps direct water to the seeds and makes it easy to see where you've planted.
- For small seeds, pick up several between fingers and sprinkle in the bottom of the trough, larger seeds can be spaced every 3-4". Cover the seeds according to directions, firming in with a light touch of your hand.
- Water in well and keep moist until they have germinated, which can be 4 – 30 days depending on your conditions. Covering with a floating row cover for 10-14 days after planting will enhance germination greatly. This cover helps to retain soil moisture, protects from the hot sun and drying winds, and it keeps rabbits, squirrels and other pests at bay.
- When the plants are 4-6" tall, thin to the recommended spacing.
- For weed control, hoe between rows and hand weed until plants are 6-8" tall and can be mulched.

