

# Guide to Growing Tomatoes



## Profile and Nutrition Facts

Tomatoes are one of the most popular fruits to grow. They are juicy, sweet, and tangy. Tomatoes are a great source of Vitamin C, Vitamin K, folate, and potassium.

There is a wide variety of tomatoes that range in size, shape, and color. Both determinate and indeterminate varieties are easy to grow in various climates, but harvest dates will vary greatly. Determinate varieties include Early Girl, 4th of July and Roma, while Indeterminate include Brandywine and Cherry.

## Planting guide

Plant in mid-May after the last frost, and soil is at least 55F. It's easiest to plant tomatoes from seedlings. It is also important to plant the seedlings 2-3 feet apart. Once planted, place a tomato cage or support system around the plant. Companion plants include basil, marigolds, lettuce, cabbage, and chive.

## How to maintain

Tomatoes need direct sunlight and moist soil to grow. To maximize an indeterminate varieties harvest, you can prune any branches touching the ground and "suckers"—which are branches that grow off the main branch. To prevent disease, plant where potatoes, peppers, eggplants, or tomatillos have not been planted in the last 2+ years.

## How to harvest

Harvesting time depends on the variety of the tomato. Some tomatoes ripen earlier than others. Pick tomatoes when they are slightly tender to touch, yet firm. They can be harvested individually or you cut them off in clusters. Indeterminate varieties will continue to produce throughout the season, while determinate varieties will produce one large bumper crop and diminish production significantly after.



## How to enjoy tomatoes

Tomatoes are delicious raw or cooked. They can be tossed into a salad or added on top of a sandwich. Tomatoes provide lycopene when cooked, and are easy to add to soups, pastas, and chili. You can even make tomato sauce, which can be frozen, canned, or refrigerated and used on top of pasta and pizza.