



Learn to Grow 3: Flowers

Outdoor Activities – At Home

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WHAT MAKES IT MEANINGFUL

Flowers ... what an amazing way to be greeted at any time and in any place!

Being welcomed to your home by flowers is a wonderful experience like no other. Imagine the feeling of arriving home to find that your flowers have grown and bloomed beautifully, full of vibrant colors and a fragrance, so aromatic, that fills the space. As beautiful and luscious as flowers are, they can serve many purposes to the people who grow them. The scent of flowers in your home enable you to feel good in several ways. You will be happy and proud of the care you took to cultivate and tend to your flowers to make them as healthy and beautiful as they are. As well, the fragrance released by flowers can enable you to feel soothed and relaxed – a great way to wind down after a long day. So why not take the time and opportunity to grow something that you will love and appreciate.

TIME

Approximate time to plant: Seeds can be sowed (planted) indoors at nearly any time of the year. Plant seeds in separate planter pots around the same time to produce flowers within the same timeframe.

- Growing nasturtium indoors in a planter pot from seeds: Can be planted anytime.
 - Mckenzie© Jewel Mixed nasturtium seeds take 32 to 40 days (4.5 to 6 weeks) to bloom.
- Growing petunia indoors in a planter pot from seeds: Can be planted anytime.
 - Mckenzie© Blue Easy Wave petunia seeds take 42 to 56 days (6 to 8 weeks) to bloom.

Approximate time to mature: Depending on the type of seedling, flowers mature, bloom and can be picked between 4 to 8 weeks after seeds have been sowed (planted) into planter pots.

MATERIALS

Gardening Tools and Supplies:

- A Bag of Nasturtium Seeds – Jewel Mixed (Approx. \$1.89)
- A Bag of Petunia Seeds – Blue Easy Wave (Approx. \$4.99)
- 2 Round Planter Pots – 12+ inches wide (Approx. \$0.99 - \$49.99)



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- 2 Round Planter Saucers – 12+ inches wide (Approx. \$0.79 - \$9.99)
- Miracle Gro® Indoor Potting Soil Mix (Approx. \$9.99)
- Miracle Gro® Shake & Feed Ultra Bloom Plant Food (Approx. \$18.49)
- Hand Trowel (Approx. \$9.99 - &12.99)
- Hand Fork/ Hand Cultivator (Approx. \$9.99 - \$14.99)
- Hand Pruners/ Pruning Shears (Approx. \$9.99 - \$39.99)
- Watering Can(s) (Approx. \$7.99 - \$29.99)
- Soil Monitor (Approx. \$14.99)
- Gardening Gloves (Approx. \$1.99 - \$24.99)

Useful Extras:

- Hand towel or Paper Towels (in case you sweat or get dirty)

Note: Expenses are based off of Canadian Tire® pricing.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Before gardening, take note of all of the gardening tools and supplies that you currently have and do not have. Gardening indoors does not require as many supplies as would be needed to prepare a garden outdoors. Acquire the necessary tools to ensure that you have what you need to make gardening as pleasant as possible, and to optimize the experience for everyone involved.
- When thinking about gardening, keep in mind the following tips:
 1. Location is important! Find a location in your building that allows for lots of sunlight. Keep in mind the amount of sun exposure required to grow each flower.
 2. Be mindful of the space where you are gardening! Ensure you know the approximate height flowers will grow, and keep the area clear.

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3. Keep in mind the size of the planter pot and consider what is a sufficient amount of seeds to plant in the soil, based on the sowing instructions.
 4. Be aware of the pH level in soil, as this determines how fertile the soil is and how well flowers will grow. The growth of certain flowers can occur within a specific range.
- Now it's time to begin gardening and preparing the soil before planting.
 1. Apply Miracle Gro® Indoor Potting Soil Mix into each planter pot. Put the planter pot into a planter pot saucer – this acts as a basin for water.
 2. Loosen and break up the Miracle Gro® soil so that it is evenly distributed, where moisture can spread, but is also able to drain well.
 3. Now that the soil is prepared, read instructions for how to space and sow flower seeds. Position seeds into the soil and water the soil.
 - To grow nasturtiums indoors in a planter pot from seeds:
 1. Nasturtium flowers can be planted at nearly any time of the year, but plan to sow seeds at approximately the same time as other plant seeds, for flowers to mature and bloom around the same timeframe.
 2. To bloom well, nasturtium requires full-sun exposure, with 6+ hours of direct sunlight.
 3. Use the soil monitor to measure the soil. Nasturtium requires a pH level that is in the 6.0 to 7.5 range, meaning that the soil is slightly acidic to neutral.
 4. Read instructions on the nasturtium seed package for how to space and sow seeds. Sow seeds approximately ½ inch deep and 10 to 12 inches apart. The separating and spacing of seeds is dependent on the size of the planter pot.
 5. Water regularly to allow the soil to be moist, but do not overwater the plant as it will not bloom as well.
 6. Plants should appear in 7 to 10 days approximately.

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7. Occasionally trim the plant throughout the growing season, as doing so encourages the plant to develop new foliage.
 8. Cut off the faded and dead flowers to prolong blooming.
 9. In the summertime, watch plant for signs of heat-stress as nasturtiums may stop blooming. Keep the flowers sufficiently watered to mitigate heat effects.
 10. Nasturtium plants can take 30 to 40 days (4 to 6 weeks) approximately to mature and bloom after planting. Flowers can grow approximately 40 centimeters tall.
 - a. Leaves and flowers can be harvested at any time using pruning shears, as to not damage the plant.
 - b. To harvest seeds for future sowing, harvest seedpods before seeds have the chance to mature and harden using pruning shears. However, if seedpods do mature, you can harvest the chickpea-sized seeds to replant in the Spring.
 - c. To enable seeds to be used for future sowing in the Spring, allow the seeds to dry on the vine, collect them, brush off the soil, dry them, and store them in a paper envelope in a cool and dark place.
- To grow petunias indoors in a planter pot from seeds:
 1. Petunia flowers can be planted at nearly any time of the year, but plan to sow seeds at approximately the same time as other plant seeds, for flowers to mature and bloom around the same timeframe.
 2. To bloom well, petunias require full-sun exposure, with 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight.
 3. Use the soil monitor to measure the soil. Petunias require a pH level that is in the 6.0 to 7.5 range, meaning that the soil is slightly acidic to neutral.
 4. Read instructions on the petunia seed package for how to space and sow seeds. Sow seeds approximately 1/8-inch-deep and ½ inch apart. The separating and spacing of seeds is dependent on the size of the planter pot.

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5. Water thoroughly once a week, and a little bit during the week to allow the soil to be moist, but not too moist.
6. Fertilize petunia plants monthly using Miracle Gro® Shake & Feed Ultra Bloom Plant Food to support rapid growth and heavy blooming.
7. To prevent petunias from getting leggy, meaning that they produce blossoms at the tips of long and leafless stems, prune the shoots to about half their length. This will encourage plants to be tidy and to continue branching and flowering. Ensure that the plants are watered well to force out new growth. Faded, old and dead blossoms can be removed using shears to improve blooms and attractiveness
8. Petunia plants can take 40 to 60 days (6 to 8 weeks) approximately to mature and bloom after planting. Flowers can grow approximately 15 to 30 centimeters tall.
 - a. Petunia flowers must remain with the plant and cannot be harvested.

RESOURCES

Include any helpful resources – like links to other instructions.

- <https://www.canadiantire.ca/en.html> (Canadian Tire website)
- <https://www.almanac.com/gardening-tools-guide> (A Guide to Useful Gardening Tools)
- <https://www.almanac.com/soil-preparation-how-do-you-prepare-garden-soil-planting> (Preparing the Soil)
- <https://www.almanac.com/learn-to-flower-garden> (Learn How to Grow a Flower Garden)
- https://www.amazon.ca/Farmers-Almanac-Flower-Gardeners-Handbook/dp/1571989285/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1Y71K4943FW3E&keywords=THE+OLD+FARMER%27S+ALMANAC+flower+Handbook&qid=1679607206&sprefix=the+old+farmer%27s+almanac+flower+handbook%2Caps%2C84&sr=8-1 (The Old Farmer's Almanac Flower Gardeners Handbook)
- <https://www.almanac.com/plant/nasturtiums> (How to Plant, Grow and Care for Nasturtiums)
- <https://mckenzieseeds.com/products/nasturtium-jewel-mixed> (Nasturtium Jewel Mix Seeds)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buAfxs_mQq0 (How to Grow Nasturtium from Seed in Containers)

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- <https://www.almanac.com/plant/petunias> (How to Plant, Grow and Care for Petunias)
- <https://mckenzieseeds.com/products/petunia-blue-easy-wave%C2%A9> (Petunia Blue Easy Wave Seeds)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZ0s92yEs-Y> (How to Grow Petunia from Seed in Containers)

SUPPORTS NEEDED

- Individuals may need hands-on support in preparing the soil, sowing the seeds, maintaining the plants, and potentially picking the flowers.
- Individuals may also need motivational support via prompts to complete the gardening process.

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE

1. A brief note about materials: It should be noted that not all tools are utilized at the same time. Please use the necessary tools at the required gardening times. Cost is based on Canadian Tire® pricing. For items that need to be purchased, use judgment in acquiring quality, yet cost-effective supplies. Tools and supplies such as planter pots and saucers can also be purchased in sets. Please support Canadian-based and local businesses if possible. Be mindful and careful of all tools and supplies, and pack them up when not in use to prevent any trips, falls or injuries.
2. Noted above are some examples of flowers to grow indoors. If you have an allergy to, or do not like any of those flowers, there are plenty of other options of flowers to grow from seed form. The following two examples – nasturtiums and petunias were chosen as they are very common and easy to plant, grow and maintain indoors from seed form in planter pots.
3. Gardening does require various activities of exercise including, but not limited to: standing stretching, bending and kneeling, among other movements. Be mindful of your body and limitations – do not go past your limits and potentially hurt yourself. Listen to your body!
4. Other good items to include are a towel or paper towel to clean up in case you get sweaty or dirty.
5. Make gardening extra fun by:
 - a. Adding music to your experience

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- b. Including some friends to socialize with
- c. A sense of adventure to learn and try something new and exciting!