

Learn to Grow 4: Plants

Outdoor Activities – At Home



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WHAT MAKES IT MEANINGFUL

Now that you have become more confident and comfortable in the gardening process, having planted vegetables, herbs and flowers, why not take the opportunity to turn your new skills into a gift for someone. Using the seeds from one of your favourite plants, cultivate a delicate, new seedling plant and present that to someone. What a nice gesture that will be to show someone that you care! It doesn't matter if you are a beginner or experienced gardener, a lovely gesture such as this is a reminder to someone that you love, respect and appreciate them. Take some time to ponder and think of the reasons why this person is important to you. Also, take a moment to acknowledge and be thankful for plants and the significance they have on the planet. They do not exist purely just to exist, but they have purpose; plants are a source of food not just for people, but for other plants and animals as well – they are a source for pollination and a way for the planet to continue to grow more plants and produce foods, such as honey. Why not give someone a meaningful, sustainable and environmentally-friendly gift today.

TIME

Approximate time to plant: Seeds can be sowed (planted) indoors at nearly any time of the year.

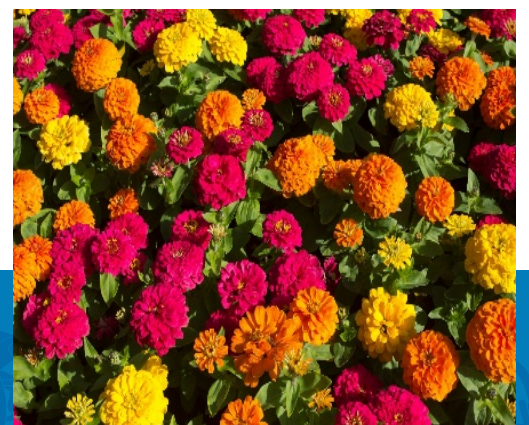
- Growing zinnia indoors in a planter pot from seeds: Can be planted anytime.
 - McKenzie© Candy Cane zinnia seeds take 35 to 60 days (5 to 8.5 weeks) to bloom.

Approximate time to mature: Depending on the type of seedling, flowers mature, bloom and can be picked between 4 to 9 weeks after seeds have been sowed (planted) into a planter pot.

MATERIALS

Gardening Tools and Supplies:

- A Bag of Zinnia Seeds – Candy Cane (Approx. \$3.29)
- 1 Round Planter Pot – 12+ inches wide (Approx. \$0.99 - \$49.99)
- 1 Round Planter Saucers – 12+ inches wide (Approx. \$0.79 - \$9.99)
- Miracle Gro© Indoor Potting Soil Mix (Approx. \$9.99)



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- 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 for the flower to grow.
 2. Be mindful of the space where you are gardening! Ensure you know the approximate height the flower will grow, and keep the area clear.
 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 the flower will grow. The growth of certain flowers can occur within a specific range.

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- Now it's time to begin gardening and preparing the soil before planting.
 1. Apply Miracle Gro® Indoor Potting Soil Mix into the 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 zinnias indoors in a planter pot from seeds:
 1. Zinnia flowers can be planted at nearly any time of the year.
 2. To bloom well, zinnias require full-sun exposure, with 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight and also require a site that has good air circulation to prevent damage to the plant, such as mildew.
 3. Use the soil monitor to measure the soil. Zinnias can adapt to most soil conditions, but the ideal pH is 5.5 to 7.5, meaning that the soil is slightly acidic to slightly alkaline.
 4. Read instructions on the zinnia seed package for how to space and sow seeds. Sow seeds approximately ¼ inch deep and space 4 to 24 inches apart. The separating and spacing of seeds is dependent on the size of the planter pot.
 5. Water regularly to maintain moisture in the soil.
 6. Zinnia seedlings should appear in 4 to 7 days approximately.
 7. When seedlings reach 3 inches tall, thin them so they are 6 to 18 inches apart, to maximize air circulation and prevent mildew.
 8. Lightly fertilize the soil using Miracle Gro® Shake & Feed Ultra Bloom Plant Food to support rapid growth and heavy blooming.
 9. After zinnia begins to flower, use shears to cut off the old flowers to encourage more flowers to develop.
 10. Zinnia plants can take 30 to 60 days (4 to 9 weeks) approximately to mature and bloom after planting. Flowers can grow approximately 50 centimeters tall.

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- a. To harvest zinnia seeds for future use, allow the last flowers of the season to mature fully, collect the seeds, brush off the soil, dry them, and store them in a paper envelope in a cool and dark place.

RESOURCES

- <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/zinnias> (How to Plant, Grow and Care for Zinna Flowers)
- <https://mckenzieseeds.com/products/zinnia-candy-cane> (Candy Cane Zinnia Seeds)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2IddxQRcY> (How to Grow Zinnia from Seed to Flower in Borders and 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

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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 is an example of a flower to grow indoors that is perfect for a bouquet. If you have an allergy to, or do not like this flower, there are plenty of other options of flowers to grow from seed form. The following example – the zinnia flower was chosen as it is very common and easy to plant, grow and maintain indoors from seed form in a planter pot.
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
 - b. Including some friends to socialize with
 - c. A sense of adventure to learn and try something new and exciting!