

Parsley

“Parsley — the jewel of herbs, both in the pot and on the plate” — Albert Stockli.

Parsley is widely used as a culinary herb. While often seen as merely a visual garnish, it's also labeled as one of the most powerful disease-fighting plants. It provides great nutritional value and many potential health benefits.

- The two most common cultivars of parsley in the garden are:

- Curly leaf parsley, used mainly as a garnish.
- Flat leaf or Italian parsley. This is more often used for cooking as it has a deeper flavor and is easier to handle on the cutting board.



Benefits and nutritional information:

- A 1/2 cup of fresh, chopped parsley provides Vitamin A: 108% of the Reference Daily Intake (RDI) of Vitamin A, 53% of the Vitamin C, 547% of Vitamin K, and 11% of Folate (Vitamin B9).
- Parsley is also high in antioxidants

Starting:

- Parsley is easy to grow, either from seeds or from nursery starts.
- If planting from seeds, sow them 1/4" deep, spaced 4 to 6 inches apart in rows 12 to 18 inches apart. The germination rate of seeds is low, so seeds should be soaked overnight before planting to increase success.
- If transplanting parsley, take extra care of the taproot since it is quite delicate.

When to plant:

- Parsley lends itself well to growing indoors and therefore can be planted year around.
- When planting outdoors, the soil temperature should be around 70 degrees, although it will germinate at a lower temperature.

Thinning, training

- Space parsley plants 6 to 8 inches apart.

Signs of over-watering, nutrient deficiency

- Crown rot and root rot are associated with soggy soil. If the soil is well drained and not overly wet, this could be an insect problem.



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Pests and pest controls

- One of the most common signs of insect damage on parsley are brown-yellow patches on leaves. These are usually signs of [whitefly](#) infestations, although it may be [aphids](#) or spider mites as well.



Harvesting

- Parsley is ready to begin picking after 70 days of growth. Since it is a biennial, it will continue to produce for a second year if properly protected during winter.
- Just as with other herbs, parsley likes to be snipped, which encourages additional growth. Bunch the stems and leaves together and snip them off at ground level with kitchen shears.
- If you just cut the leafy tops and leave the stems, the plant will be less productive.
- When parsley begins to bolt during its second season of growth, it's time to discard it since the leaves will begin to turn bitter.