



EDIBLE
GARDENING
SERIES

Garlic

Garlic has been used throughout history for both culinary and medicinal purposes. The bulbs are the most commonly used part of the plant. The bulb is divided into numerous fleshy sections called cloves. The leaves and flowers are also edible and have a milder flavor.

Garlic is grown from the individual cloves. Each clove will produce one plant with a single bulb: which may in turn contain up to 20 cloves.

Garlic has been hailed as a healing herb for thousands of years. It is an antioxidant, an antimicrobial and promotes great blood sugar levels as well as cholesterol levels by lowering LDL cholesterol.

TYPES

Softneck garlic: has a strong flavor and tends to be better for storing because it has several protective outer layers of papery skin. It sends out strappy foliage that makes it ideal to braid for easy storing. Sometimes called "Silverskin Garlic" for the white or silver color of its skin or "Artichoke Garlic" because the cloves overlap like the scales of an artichoke.

Hardneck garlic: wide range and quality of flavors; from sweet and creamy to outright eye-watering. Hardneck garlic is often referred to as gourmet garlic. It gets its name from the stiff stalks or neck of the garlic plants. It tends to have fewer cloves than the softneck varieties. The cloves circle around a central stalk and are rather uniform in size.

EXPOSURE

Garlic prefers full sun and well-drained soil.

PLANTING

First, the bulbs are broken into individual cloves. Use only the largest cloves to reap the biggest bulbs. Work in a handful of Dr. Earth Vegetable Fertilizer or Bulb Food directly beneath each planting spot. Plant pointy side up, 2" deep and 3 to 4" apart in rows spaced 18" or closer in raised beds.

Soil pH needs to be 6.0 - 7.0. The soil will benefit from liming at least a month or so before planting.

Plant garlic from September through early November.

In our climate, garlic tops usually break ground by the end of fall. In February, side dress with more Dr. Earth Vegetable Fertilizer or feed 2 to 3 times with Fish Fertilizer once growth begins.

As the garlic reaches maturity the leaves will brown then die back. This is the cue that it is time to harvest your garlic crop. Harvest when there are 3 to 5 green leaves left.

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WATERING

Keeping your garlic watered mid-May to June is important (especially if the rain is not consistent), as this is when the bulb of the garlic is forming. But it's also essential that you cease watering by the end of June so the garlic can start to cure.

GARLIC SCAPES

Hard-necked varieties of garlic produce a green stem and flower called a "scape" in the Spring - end of May to mid-June. It is best to pop this off where the leaves meet the scape so the plant can send its energy to produce a bigger bulb. Garlic scapes usually have a milder flavor than garlic cloves and are delicious eaten fresh, pickled or sautéed in a stirfry. They also make wonderful pesto!

HARVESTING

In the Northwest, garlic harvest usually begins around the third week of June for softneck varieties and mid-July for hardneck.

Harvest garlic plants with three to four brown leaves and don't be alarmed if all the plants aren't ready at the same time.

Garlic can be harvested one head at a time with a shovel. Set the shovel far enough away from the bulb so the garlic doesn't get nicked by the blade when coming out of the dirt.

STORAGE

Once bulbs are free of the ground, gently knock off as much loose soil as possible. Be gentle with your garlic so it doesn't get bruised! Put the bulbs - stalks, dirt and all - on a tray or hang plants to dry in a protected spot out of direct sun. After a week or two when soil has dried, gently rub off the dirt and outer skin. Do not wash or get wet, but trim off roots with a sharp pair of scissors or pruners. For hardnecks clip the stalk even with the pointy tips of the cloves. Softneck garlic can be braided and hung (or clipped an inch up the neck if you're not going to braid it).

CHECK LIST

- ✓ Seed Garlic
- ✓ Dr. Earth Vegetable & Tomato Fertilizer, Dr. Earth Bone Meal or Dr. Earth Bulb Food
- ✓ Gardener & Bloome Soil-Building Compost
- ✓ Fish Fertilizer
- ✓ Garden Pearls (Calcium)