

How to Make Your Own Biodegradable Plant Pots and Sow Seeds Successfully

- **Seeds**

- Why start plants from seeds
 - Cost effective, allows for a wider selection of plant varieties, promotes stronger root systems
 - Gives you access to a wider selection of seed varieties.
 - When purchasing seedlings, you are limited by availability.
 - Jump-starts a more productive growing season.
 - Seedlings a few weeks old can be transplanted outside as soon as soil and air temperatures are warm enough. This enables you to achieve an earlier harvest. Crops with a long maturity period can be started early enough for them to produce a harvestable crop. Crops with a short maturity period can be sown in succession, to keep the harvest coming week after week.
- How to store seeds
 - In a dark, cool environment - ideally in airtight containers or sealed bags to maintain their viability and prevent moisture damage
- What do seeds need to germinate:
 - Water
 - Initiates the growth process, allows the embryo to emerge and begin sprouting
 - Oxygen
 - Necessary for cellular respiration, provides energy for metabolic processes that drive germination and seedling growth
 - Temperatures
 - Affects the activity of enzymes involved in germination
 - Each plant species has temperature requirements for optimal growth and development
- Starting seeds indoors
 - Which seeds to start indoors?
 - Celery
 - Eggplant
 - Peppers
 - Tomatoes
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- Starting plants from seeds (*demonstrate each step*)
 - Preparing the medium

- Create a suitable growing environment by selecting and preparing the soil or growing medium
 - Chose a sterile soilless medium
 - Sowing seeds
 - Plant the seeds in the prepared soil or growing medium
 - Ensure seeds are sowed at the appropriate depth and spacing to initiate germination and growth
 - Cover with plastic wrap or dome cover
 - Provide natural light or grow lights to help seeds germinate
 - Monitoring
 - Regularly observe and assess the progress of seed germination and seedling growth
 - Adjust environmental conditions and care practices as needed
 - Seedlings should not dry out. Monitor soil and spritz water but do not over saturate the soil.
 - When seedlings are 2 inches tall, remove cover
 - Temperature: should be about 70°F. A heat mat helps maintain ideal temperature.
 - Thinning out
 - Selectively remove excess seedlings, reduce overcrowding and competition for resources, such as soil nutrients and water, to promote healthier growth and development of the remaining seedlings
 - Pot up
 - Transplant seedlings into larger containers or pots with more space and nutrient-rich soil to accommodate their growing roots
 - Promote further seedling development before planting them into their final outdoor location
 - Harden off
 - Gradually acclimate seedlings to outdoor conditions by exposing them to sunlight, wind, and fluctuating temperatures
 - Prepare them for transplanting into the garden
- **Types of Eco-Friendly Pots**
 - Plantable
 - Pots made from biodegradable materials that can be planted directly into the soil along with the seedling

- Eliminates the need for transplanting and reducing root disturbance
 - Biodegradable
 - Break down over time into organic matter when exposed to moisture, air, and microorganisms in the soil
 - Reduces waste and minimizes environmental impact
 - Looks for organic pots to ensure harmful residue is not left behind
 - Compostable
 - Break down into organic matter within a few months
 - Similar to biodegradable pots
 - Can be added to compost bins or piles to further enrich the soil - recommended
- **Types of Eco-Friendly Pots Commonly Found in Stores**
 - Peat pots
 - Biodegradable pots made from compressed peat moss
 - Coconut coir
 - Pots made from coconut fiber
 - Offers good drainage and aeration for seedlings
 - Decomposes naturally in soil
 - Feather pots
 - Made from poultry feathers mixed with a biodegradable binder
 - Sustainable alternative to plastic pots
 - Western pulp
 - Biodegradable pots made from recycled paper pulp
 - Environmental option for starting seeds and transplanting seedlings
 - Cow pots
 - Made from composted cow manure
 - Provides nutrients to plants as they decompose in the soil
 - Enhances soil fertility and reduces waste
- **How to Make Your Own Biodegradable Pots**
 - Newspaper pots
 - Toilet paper tube pots
 - Egg crate seed trays