

# Start Your Own Seedlings Indoors

## MATERIALS FOR SUCCESS

- Top quality seed starting planting media (do NOT use garden soil)
- Clean containers with drainage holes (new or sterilize recycled with 10% bleach solution)
- Trays that do not drain (optional)
- Seeds
- Water
- Fertilizer
- Labels and markers
- Plastic dome or plastic wrap
- Seedling heat mat (optional)
- Fluorescent light fixtures (either cool white or one cool white and one natural daylight tube)
- Plant light stand with adjustable chains
- Light timer (optional)
- Soil thermometer

## KNOW WHEN TO PLANT

- 1 Know the average last spring frost date for your area.**
  - Refer to Utah State University Climate Center: [climate.usurf.usu.edu/reports/freezeDates.php](http://climate.usurf.usu.edu/reports/freezeDates.php)
- 2 Read seed packet for specific plant requirements**
  - When to plant
  - Suggested planting depth and spacing
  - Germination period
  - Days to maturity: the number of days until harvest to be sure your choices will ripen before frost

## Wasatch Front Vegetable Chart

Average First Frost Free Day = May 1-15

Vegetable Crop from Seed	Days to Maturity	Mar. 1	Mar. 15	Apr. 1	Apr. 15	May 1	May 15	Jun. 1	Jun. 15	Jul. 1	Jul. 15	Aug. 1	Aug. 15	Sep. 1	Sep. 15	Oct. 1	Oct. 15
Beans	65-100					●	●	●	●	●							
Carrots/Turnips	60-80		●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●			
Broccoli/Cauliflower/Cabbage	50-70	●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
Corn	65-95				●	●	●	●	●								
Garlic	100-120	●	●	●	●										●	●	●
Kale	50-60	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●				
Lettuce (leafy types)	45-60		●	●	●	●						●	●				
Onions/Leeks	100-120	●	●	●	●	●							●	●	●		
Peas	50-70	●	●	●	●	●						●	●				
Peppers	60-100					●	●	●	●	●							
Potatoes	100-130			●	●	●	●										
Radishes	25-35	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●			
Spinach	40-50	●	●	●	●	●						●	●	●			
Beets/Swiss Chard	50-60		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●			
Tomatoes	60-90				●	●	●	●	●								
Cucumbers/Melons/Pumpkins	85-95					●	●	●	●								
Summer/Winter Squash	80-100				●	●	●	●									

 Transplants

 Planting seeds

 Estimated planting dates

 Possible with protection

 Next year crop

## SOWING THE SEEDS

- Fill the prepared containers with top quality seed starting planting media
- Moisten the media
- Plant as suggested on seed packet (3 times seed diameter)
- Cover containers with plastic wrap or dome and place in tray without drainage (to keep furniture surface dry)
- Place on seedling heat mat to speed germination
- Day temperature should be in the 60-80°F range
- Night temperature should be in the 55-70°F range

## WHEN THE SEED GERMINATES

- Remove the plastic covering
- Remove from seedling heat mat
- Place under grow lights (a windowsill does NOT provide adequate light)
- Adjust lights 1-2" above plant foliage as they grow
- Provide light 12 to 14 hours daily
- Monitor the soil and provide consistent moisture ONLY as needed
- Fertilize after true leaves emerge

## THIN THE PLANTS

- Thin crowded plants (after at least one set of true leaves emerge)
- Cut plants to be removed with small scissors at the soil line

## TRANSPLANT THE SEEDLINGS INTO INDIVIDUAL POTS

- Carefully separate seedlings with a spoon or knife
- Handle seedlings by their leaves, not the stem
- Replant with root below soil mix, stem above

## ACCLIMATE/HARDEN OFF PLANTS

- When plants have four to six true leaves
- Gradually increase outdoor exposure over a 2-week interval
- Transplant mature seedlings into the garden when soils are in the 65-70°F temperature range



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Easy to Make Grow Light Stand from K-State Research and Extension:** [tinyurl.com/pvclightstandvideo](https://tinyurl.com/pvclightstandvideo)
- **Grow Your Own Transplants at Home:** [tinyurl.com/growyourowntransplants](https://tinyurl.com/growyourowntransplants)
- **Suggested Vegetable Planting Dates for the Wasatch Front:** [tinyurl.com/suggestedplantingdates](https://tinyurl.com/suggestedplantingdates)
- **How to Start Seeds Indoors:** [tinyurl.com/howtostartseedsindoors](https://tinyurl.com/howtostartseedsindoors)
- **Starting Seeds Indoors from University of Minnesota Extension:** [tinyurl.com/startingseedsindoor](https://tinyurl.com/startingseedsindoor)