



Growing Potatoes in Containers

If you have clay soil, alkaline soil, or even no soil then you probably have not had a good opportunity to grow potatoes. No worries! Plant your potato crop in a container. It may sound unusual, but root crops can easily be grown in containers as long as you provide proper growing conditions and a little loving care.

STEP 1

The first step is to choose the right potato variety for your garden. Select ones that will mature at different times to ensure a harvest all season long. Look at their culinary uses (some are better for baking, others for mashing or frying), and if you are planning to store them, source out long-keeping varieties. Potatoes can be planted from mid-March to late May; any later and they may not mature on time.

STEP 2

Choose your container. The container should be a minimum size of 18" (45 cm) wide and deep and have sufficient drainage. Next, follow these steps:

- Fill bottom of container with 4" (10 cm) of container soil mix; add tubers (use 3-4 tubers per 18" (45 cm) wide pot). Cover with 3" (7.5 cm) of soil.

- Water and place in a full sun location.

- Provide a deep daily watering; this will help prevent rot, skin lesions and malformed potatoes. A weekly application of kelp fertilizer will keep the potatoes growing at a steady, healthy rate.



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- When tuber sprouts are 8” (20 cm) high, bury the sprouts in container soil mix, leaving the top 2” (5 cm) exposed. This will prevent light from reaching the tubers and stop them from turning green. Allow plants to grow to top of container before filling up container with soil.

- In late summer or early fall when the top of the foliage turns yellow, cut off foliage and allow your potatoes to sit for three days without water. Then gently dump out the container contents and harvest.

- Store your potatoes in a cool, dry environment with little light. Do not store damaged, scabby or blemished potatoes; one bad potato could spoil the bunch.



POTATO GROWING TIPS

- Avoid using fresh manure, compost and lime. High amounts of these additives can cause potato scab.

- Plant potatoes away from tomatoes, eggplants, cucumbers and peppers to reduce chances of wilt and blight.

- When you purchase your potatoes, you are actually purchasing tubers, and each one is a plant of its own. A healthy tuber will contain enough water and nutrients to help it grow.

- The tuber may be planted whole or cut into egg-size pieces. When cutting, ensure that an “eye” remains with each piece, and allow cuts to heal for two days before planting. Keep in a dry, low-lit area until ready to plant.



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