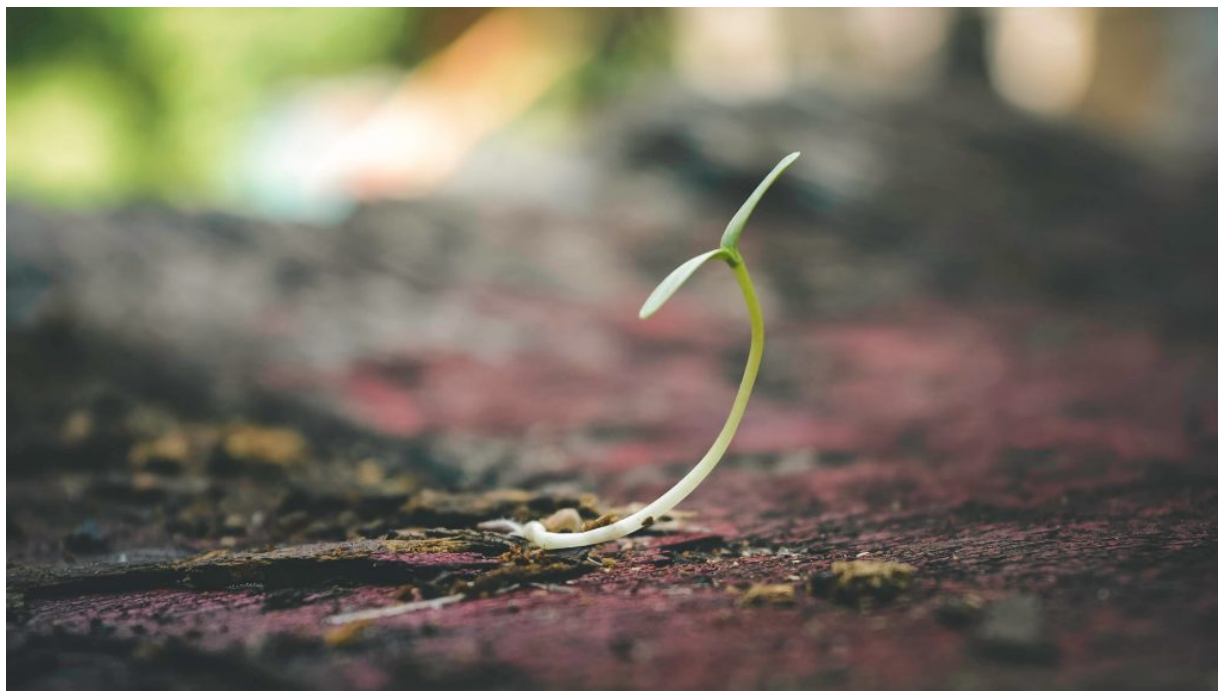


I'm New to Gardening: Is Starting From Seed Worth It?



'Tis the season to start fielding questions from curious friends interested in starting a garden. One of my friends recently moved into a new home and is keen to grow a few incredible edibles in her available outdoor space. She's unsure of whether to bother with seed starting and wondered if she'd be better off simply buying plants at a local nursery.

What should she do? Here's a breakdown of the two options.

Benefits of Seed Starting

Seed starting is a great way to get started with gardening. Here's why:

- **There's so much choice.** When you're starting from seed, you have a whole slew of plants available to you. You're not stuck with the single variety available at the local nursery.
- **You have control over plant growth.** You decide the

products used to grow your plants. Do you want to use organic methods? Go right ahead! When buying from a nursery, you may not have all the information about a plant's history. You also need to pay close attention to any hitchhikers when purchasing plants from someone else. Are there pests hidden in the foliage? Are there any signs of disease?

- **It's a rewarding process.** There's nothing that compares to the feeling of watching a plant go from seed to harvest. It's a seriously fulfilling adventure.

Of course, seed starting also has plenty of drawbacks. It requires time and effort. You'll need to watch your plants for signs of distress and work to ensure they have everything they need (light, water, nutrients, and room to grow).

While seed starting setup costs vary significantly, there's some initial investment required. Though, it's easy to start [seeds on a budget](#).

The risk of failure is probably the biggest potential drawback, but I'm of the opinion that [failure](#) is the best way to learn!

Benefits of purchasing from a nursery

I think buying from a nursery has its pros, especially if you're just starting and plan to work in a small space. Buying a handful of plants isn't much more expensive than starting a shelving unit full of seeds.

- **Plant availability.** While you have a lot more variety at your fingertips when starting from seed, you'll find hard-to-grow plants at your nursery. Things like asparagus, fruit bushes, and fruit trees are tough to grow from seed but are readily available at local nurseries.

- **Simplicity.** If you're a busy person, the time required to take care of seedlings is something to consider. Buying from a nursery is easy and requires minimal effort.
- **Questions answered.** At specialized nurseries, the staff is available to answer all of your questions, which is super useful if you're totally new to gardening.

Of course, there's no reason you can't do both! Last year, contaminated soil mix caused most of my seedlings to die, and I was left with only a handful of viable starts. I ended up buying a bunch of plants at my local nursery to make up for my devastating loss.

Can you think of any other benefits to either option that I forgot to mention? Let me know! Leave a comment with your thoughts.