

7 Plants You Can Direct Seed



Recently, I've mentioned that this year I just don't have the bandwidth to garden like I usually do. But that doesn't mean I'm completely abandoning my favorite hobby. Although I didn't

start seedlings indoors, I still have a vast collection of seeds at my disposal, and I've already started sketching a plan for what I want to plant. There are plenty of things I can direct seed and grow without much intervention. A bit of thinning here and there is all that's required.

Some plants are great for direct seeding because they grow quickly. Others do best direct-seeded because they don't transplant well. When I started gardening, I direct seeded *everything*. I didn't have the space to commit to starting seeds indoors, and I didn't really understand that some plants needed long growing seasons to reach maturity. Through the years, though, I've learned about the best plants to direct seed—with a lot of trial and error.

I've even had success direct seeding some dwarf tomato varieties! With gardening, the sky's the limit. But to get you started off on the right foot this year, here are 10 plants you can direct seed just before or after your last frost date.

Plants You Can Direct Seed

Here are some of the easiest plants to direct seed in the garden.

- **Radishes.** These pungent, crispy root vegetables are one of the quickest growing edibles in the garden. Like most root veggies, they don't transplant well. If you're going the [square foot garden](#) route, plant 16 or 9 per square.
- **Carrots.** I just sowed my carrot seeds in the garden. I normally plant 16 per square, but this year I decided to broadcast sow the seeds because I'm planting so many, and I didn't feel like carefully pinching seeds into hundreds of holes. Carrots grow slowly, but they're really easy to grow given the right soil conditions. Once they sprout, all you need to do is thin out the seedlings. After that, regular watering is really all

that's required.

- **Kale.** Another slow-growing one. BUT [kale](#) does exceptionally well when direct-seeded. You can sow kale in the spring before your last frost date. I like the interplant kale with herbs and flowers to entice pollinators and beneficial bugs to settle in. Most years, cabbage loopers decimate my kale crops not under protection. But last year, I had a lot of success pairing my brassicas with flowers and flowering herbs.
- **Spinach.** This crop is another easy one to grow. You'll have the best results sowing early in the spring as soon as the soil is workable. Spinach bolts when the weather gets warm, so early plantings can mitigate premature bolting. Grow spinach in partial shade. The hot afternoon sun, even on a cool day, can trigger bolting.
- **Asian greens.** There are many delicious Asian greens out there, but some of my favorites include bok choy, Chinese broccoli, and frilly mustards. Most of these grow well from seed. You can also harvest them early as baby greens.
- **Summer squash.** I'm not planting squash this year because I have a squash bug problem. But if you're lucky enough not to have to deal with these irritating insects, summer squash is an excellent plant to grow from seed. It grows exceptionally fast, and once it starts to produce, you'll have plenty of food to eat. My favorite variety is [patty pan](#). Sow summer squash right after the last frost date.
- **Beans.** Beans grow so quickly I never bother starting them from seed. They also don't love to be moved around. I prefer bush varieties because they don't require supports, but if you space them too closely, you can end up with a tangled mess. Sow bean seeds right after the last frost date.

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