



Gourd Planting Guide

About Gourds

Gourds are easy-to-grow, uniquely-shaped fruits that are edible and can be used in place of squash. Additionally, Birdhouse/Bottle gourds can be used to create homes for feathered friends, while Luffa gourds are used as exfoliating sponges.

When to Plant

Gourds germinate and grow best in temperatures between 75 and 80 degrees F. Taking about 180 days from planting to harvest, colder zones with short growing seasons will need to start indoors 6-8 weeks before the final frost. Warmer zones should sow seeds 3-4 weeks before.

Where to Plant

Gourds prefer full sun and rich well-drained soil that is rich in organic material. Depending on the type, gourd vines often stretch to lengths of 30' or more! Gourds grow well on trellises, arbors or just left to run on the ground. Additionally, they do best planted directly into hills formed of aged compost and soil.

How to Plant

Sow seeds 1-2" deep, with 4-5 seeds per hill, each spaced 4' apart. If growing in rows, space the rows 5-10' apart. The more space you can provide, the better, as it will result in larger gourds.

Caring for Gourds

Once your strongest seedlings emerge, thin to 2-3 per hill. Keep soil moist. Gourds need very little attention except to keep the plants from overwhelming each other and other garden plants. After 110-130 days the hard shell varieties should be fully mature while the smaller gourd needs only 90-100 days. Vines should be left to brown, but harvest your gourds prior to cold weather settling in. Dipper and Birdhouse/Bottle gourds should be kept in a cool dry place for several weeks to cure. Large Mix, Small Mix and Turks Turban can be harvested once the fruit turns brown. To remove from the vine, use sharp shears and make a clean cut, leaving a portion of the stem remaining depending on your creative needs.