



## Venus Flytrap Planting Guide

### About Venus Flytrap

*Dionaea muscipula*, commonly known as Venus flytrap, thrives in the wetlands of North and South Carolina. Sporting green leaves resembling hinged jaws, it possesses the remarkable ability to snap shut, ensnaring and consuming insects. The interior of the trap exhibits vibrant hues of red or orange and emits a sweet fragrance to allure its prey. Universally acclaimed and cultivated, Venus flytrap stands as the most globally renowned carnivorous plant.

### When to Plant

The best time to sow Venus flytrap seeds is between February and September for optimal growth conditions. If the soil is kept between 75°F and 85°F, germination can take about two weeks. If the soil is much cooler than this, germination can take as long as five weeks! Provide bright, indirect light all day.

### Where to Plant

While Venus flytraps can be cultivated as houseplants, they flourish most when grown outdoors. Ensure the plants receive ample sunlight, with a minimum of four hours of bright, direct sunlight each day. Originating from boggy and swampy habitats, it is crucial to maintain a consistently moist environment for these plants.

When cultivated outdoors, plants can sustain themselves and endure for several months without relying on prey consumption. However, indoor-grown Venus flytraps may require supplementation through feeding live insects. These carnivorous plants consume a variety of insects, such as ants, grasshoppers, flying insects, beetles, and spiders, which can be obtained online or in select garden stores.



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### How to Plant

Mix sphagnum peat moss and silica sand in a 1:1 ratio. You can also add perlite for better aeration. This mimics the nutrient-poor, acidic soil of their natural habitat. Consider sterilizing the soil to prevent mold and fungal growth, which can be detrimental to seedlings. Avoid using soil blended with additional ingredients like fertilizer. Refrain from using anything marketed as potting soil such as Miracle-Gro, as these contain minerals detrimental to Venus flytraps that could lead to their demise. Keep in mind that Venus flytraps have adapted to nutrient-poor soils by evolving to trap insects for their nutritional needs.

Choose a shallow container with good drainage, such as a lidded plastic produce container. Scatter the seeds on the surface of the moist soil. Do not bury them, as Venus flytrap seeds require light for germination. Lightly cover the seeds with a thin layer of the same soil mixture or sphagnum peat moss. Use distilled or rainwater only, as tap water can contain minerals harmful to Venus flytraps. Gently mist the soil with a spray bottle to keep it moist but not waterlogged.

Maintain a temperature between 75°F and 85°F, which is ideal for germination. Provide bright, indirect light. Avoid direct sunlight, which can be too intense for young seedlings. If you live in a dry climate, cover the container with a clear plastic wrap or a plastic lid with holes to maintain high humidity. Ventilate usually once a day to prevent mold growth. If you notice mold or algae, improve air circulation and reduce watering.

### How to Care for Venus Flytrap

As the seedlings emerge, remove the covers and gradually introduce more sunlight. Continue to keep the soil moist, reducing watering frequency as the plant matures. Transplant the seedlings when they are big enough to handle, usually when they have a few traps developed. They will still be very small and growing close to the soil surface. Use a spoon or even toothpicks to help extract the young seedlings. Use the same soil mixture and gently transfer each seedling to its own container. Venus flytraps can catch their own food once they have several traps. Avoid overfeeding.

Mature plants require a dormancy period in winter. This may not be necessary in the first year but is crucial in subsequent years. The dormancy period in winter is a crucial adaptation for survival in changing climates.