

How to Grow New Fruit and Vegetable Plants from Food Scraps

(adapted from <https://foodrevolution.org/blog/reduce-food-waste-regrow-from-scraps/>)

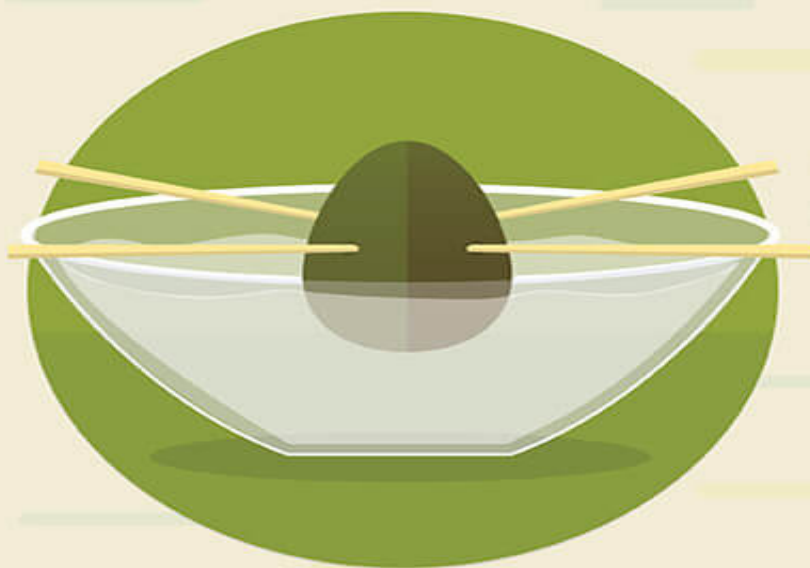
Want to learn how to grow fruits and vegetables without buying any seeds or transplants? Look no further than your own trash can or compost bin. Many people think of food scraps as waste or future fertilizer. Most people do not know that these discarded plant parts are alive and can grow into a complete plant. You just need to know how to do it.

Below is a list of common fruits and vegetables that can be grown from either the seeds that come inside the fruit or the top and bottom that comes with the vegetable.

1. Avocado – Pit is the large seed inside. Need toothpicks and cup of water. Change water every day.
2. Basil – Stems can be rooted in a vase filled with water. Change water every day.
3. Boc Choy – Base of the plant is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
4. Cabbage – Base of the plant is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
5. Carrot – Carrot top is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
6. Celery – Base of the plant is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
7. Cilantro – Stems can be rooted in a vase filled with water. Change water every day.
8. Garlic – Place clove in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
9. Ginger – Place part of ginger root in shallow bowl. Change water every day.
10. Green Onions, Leeks and Scallions – Base of the plant is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water.
11. Hot Pepper – Save seeds from inside pepper fruit. Once dry, plant in soil. Keep soil moist.
12. Lemongrass – Stems can be rooted in a vase filled with water. Change water every day.
13. Mushrooms – Stems are placed in soil. Keep soil moist.
14. Onions – Base of the plant is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
15. Pineapple – Pineapple top is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
16. Potatoes – Cut small potato in half. Let air dry overnight. Plant potato half in soil. Keep soil moist.
17. Pumpkin – Save seeds from inside pumpkin fruit. Once dry, plant in soil. Keep soil moist.
18. Romaine Lettuce – Base is saved and placed in shallow bowl of water. Change water every day.
19. Tomatoes – Save seeds from inside tomato fruit. Once dry, plant in soil. Keep soil moist.

I hope you try one of these methods. If you do, please send me a picture of your new plant! Remember, you can reduce waste, save money, and have fun with this handy guide to growing real food from scraps. –Mr. Blanton

Avocado



Use toothpicks to balance pit, root side down, in small jar of water



Place in sunlit area



Change water every day



When tree is seven to eight inches tall plant in 10-inch pot

Don't throw away your avocado pits. Use them to grow an avocado tree. Not every pit will produce roots, so your best bet is to try two or three pits at once. Start by cleaning off the pit, removing any remains by rinsing it under cold water and then toweling it dry. Push four toothpicks into the pit, evenly spaced apart. Use the toothpicks to balance the pit over the top of a glass jar (feel free to salvage a wide-mouthed jar from the recycling bin), making sure the pit is pointy side up. Fill the dish or jar with water, enough that about half of the pit is submerged. Place the dish/jar in a sunlit area and change the water every day or so. After approximately three to six weeks, the top of the pit will begin to split open. Several weeks after that, a stem, leaves, and roots will begin to grow.

A few weeks after this growth occurs, you should see leaves. Be patient. In approximately three months, when your tree is around 7 to 8 inches tall, plant it in a 10-inch pot with adequate drainage. Fill the pot with soil, and press your avocado sapling into it, root-side down (so the top half of the pit remains uncovered). Keep the sapling in a sunny area and water it regularly.

Basil



Strip leaves
from
 $\frac{3}{4}$ of stems



Place
stems in
jar of water



Place in
sunny, but not
too hot, area



Change
water every
other day



When roots grow to
about 2 inches, plant
stems in 4-inch pot

Liven up pasta dishes, sauces, and pizzas, all for the price of one basil plant. Select several 4-inch stems from a bunch of basil. Then strip all leaves from about 75 percent of each stem with a sharp knife. Put the stems in a jar of water and place in a sunny (but not too hot) location. Change the water every other day. You'll soon notice new roots form along the stems.

When the roots grow to about 2 inches in length, plant the individual stems in a 4-inch pot. Keep the pot in an area that gets at least six hours of sunshine each day, and water regularly. Harvest when the plants are full grown but do not remove all the leaves at one time.

Bok Choy



Place the base of a bok choy plant bottom down in a bowl with water (just enough to cover the base)



Replace water every few days



Once you see regrowth, transfer to container or garden and cover with soil up to new growth

Cut off the base of a bok choy plant and place it in a bowl bottom-down. Add a small amount of water in the bowl. Cover the whole base with water, but do not add more than 1/4 inch above the base. Replace water every few days. In about one week, you should see regrowth around the center of the base.

Once you see regrowth, transfer the plant to a container or garden. Cover everything except the new growth with soil. Your bok choy should be full grown and ready to harvest in approximately five months.

Cabbage



Place leftover leaves in a bowl with a small amount of water



Set bowl in sunlit area



Replace water every couple days

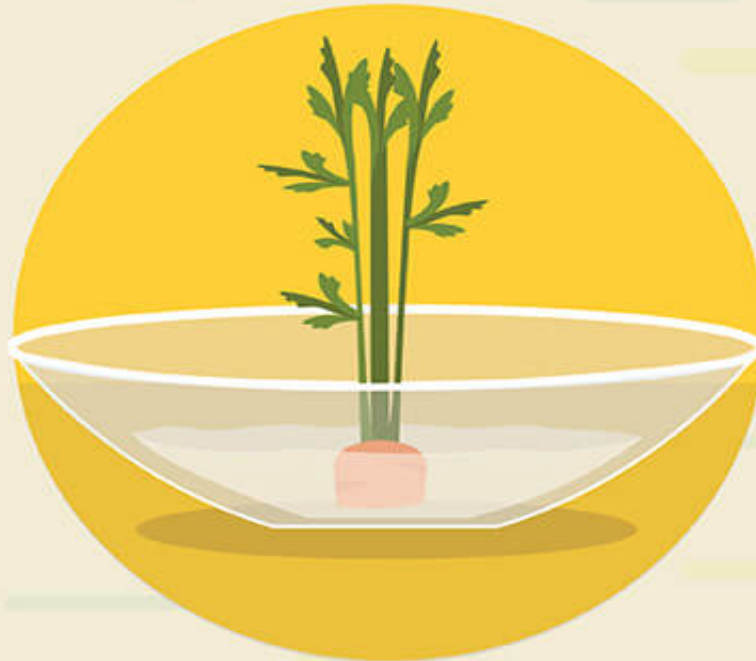


Transplant cabbage to garden when roots and new leaves appear

Grow your very own cabbage patch for cheap. Place leftover leaves in a bowl and add a small amount of water in the bottom. Set the bowl in an area that receives a lot of sunlight. Every couple of days, replace the water and mist the leaves with water.

When roots and new leaves begin to appear, transplant the cabbage into a garden. Harvest when fully grown, then repeat with the new leaves.

Carrot Greens



Place a carrot top in small bowl, cut side down, with an inch of water



Place dish in sunny windowsill



Change water every day

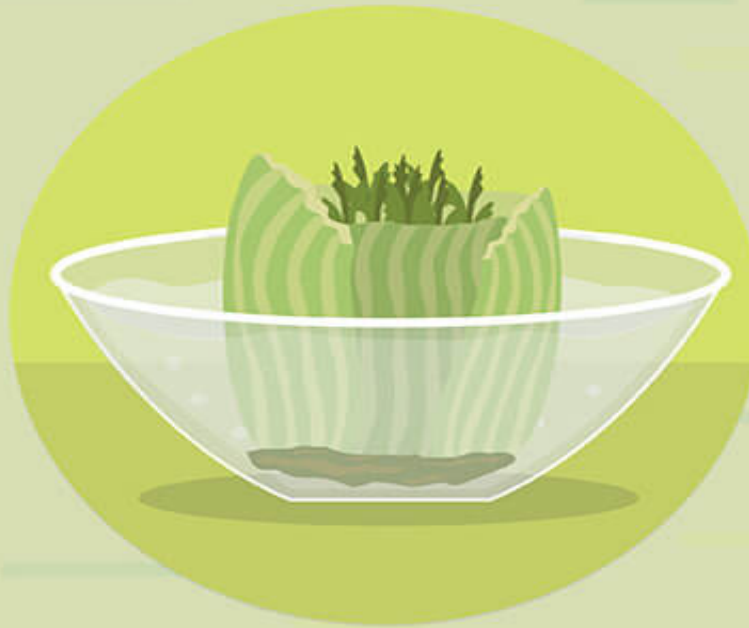


Plant tops in soil when tops sprout shoots

Instead of defaulting to the compost, use carrot tops to grow healthy carrot greens. Place a carrot top or tops in a bowl, cut side down. Fill the bowl with about an inch of water so the top is halfway covered. Place the dish in a sunny windowsill and change the water every day.

The tops will eventually sprout shoots. When they do, plant the tops in soil, careful not to cover the shoots. Harvest the greens to taste. (Some people prefer the baby greens; others prefer them fully grown.)

Celery



Place celery base in small bowl with water, stalks facing upright



Place bowl in sunny area



Change water every other day



After five to seven days, move base to planter or garden and cover with soil up to leaf tips

Rinse off the base of a bunch of celery and place it in a small bowl or similar container (any wide-mouthed, glass, or ceramic container should do). Fill the container with warm water, cut stalks facing upright. Place the bowl in a sunny area. Leave the base as-is for about one week and change the water every other day. Use a spray bottle to gently mist the plant every other day. The tiny yellow leaves around the center of the base will grow thicker and turn dark green.

After five to seven days, move the celery base to a planter or garden and cover it with soil, leaving the leaf tips uncovered. Keep the plant well watered. You'll soon notice celery leaves regenerate from the base, as well as a few small stalks. Harvest when fully grown, then repeat the process.

Cilantro



Place
stems in jar
of water



Place in
sunny area



Change
water
every day

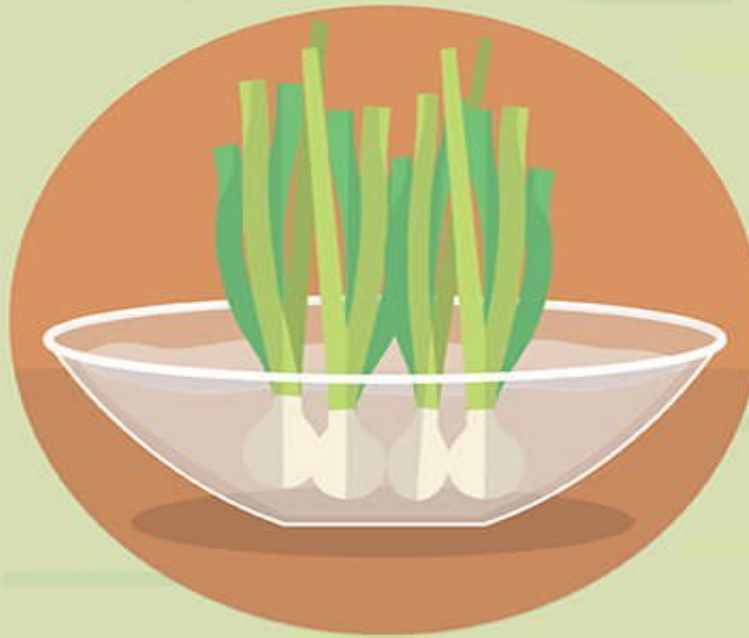


When roots
grow, plant
stems in
a pot

Just like basil, cilantro can regrow roots, and grow new plants once replanted. Simply place cilantro stems in a bowl of water, put the bowl in a sunny area, and change the water every other day.

Once the stems sprout plenty of roots, plant them in a pot. Expect new shoots to come up in a few weeks. In a few months, you'll have a full-grown plant. Harvest leaves as needed, but be sure not to strip a stem of all its leaves at one time.

Garlic Sprouts



**Place budding
cloves, or
whole bulb, in
a small bowl**



**Add water
until it covers
bottom
of bulbs**

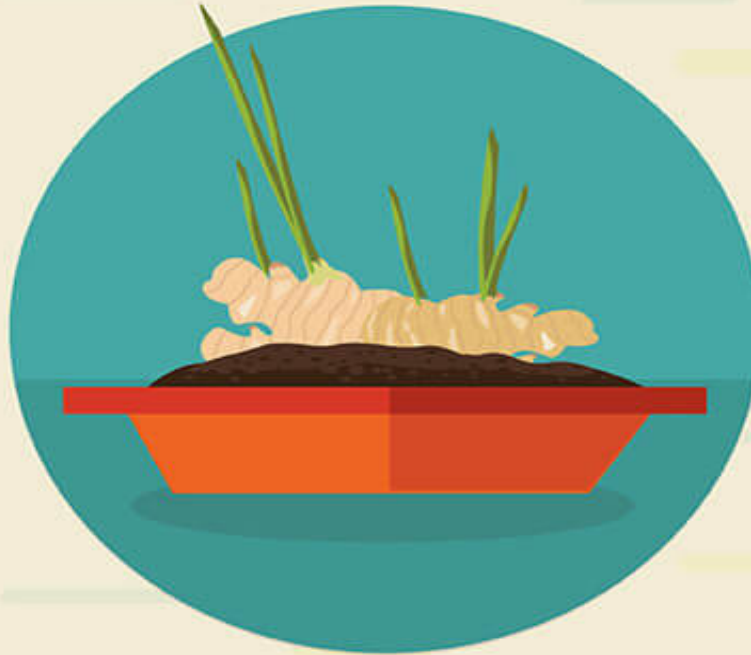


**Change
water every
other day**

While you may not be able to grow garlic bulbs, you can grow garlic sprouts—also known as garlic greens—from a clove or bulb. Place a budding clove (or even a whole bulb) in a small cup, bowl, or jar. Add water until it covers the bottom of the container and touches the bottom of the cloves. Be careful not to submerge the cloves in order to avoid rot. Change the water every other day and place in a sunny area.

After a few days, the clove or bulb will start to produce roots. Sprouts may grow as long as 10 inches, but snip off the greens once they're around 3 inches tall. Just be sure not to remove more than one-third of each sprout at one time. They're tasty on top of baked potatoes, salads, in dips, or as a simple garnish.

Ginger



Pull off a piece of ginger from a fresh chunk



Place in potting soil with smallest buds facing down



Place pot in indirect sunlight

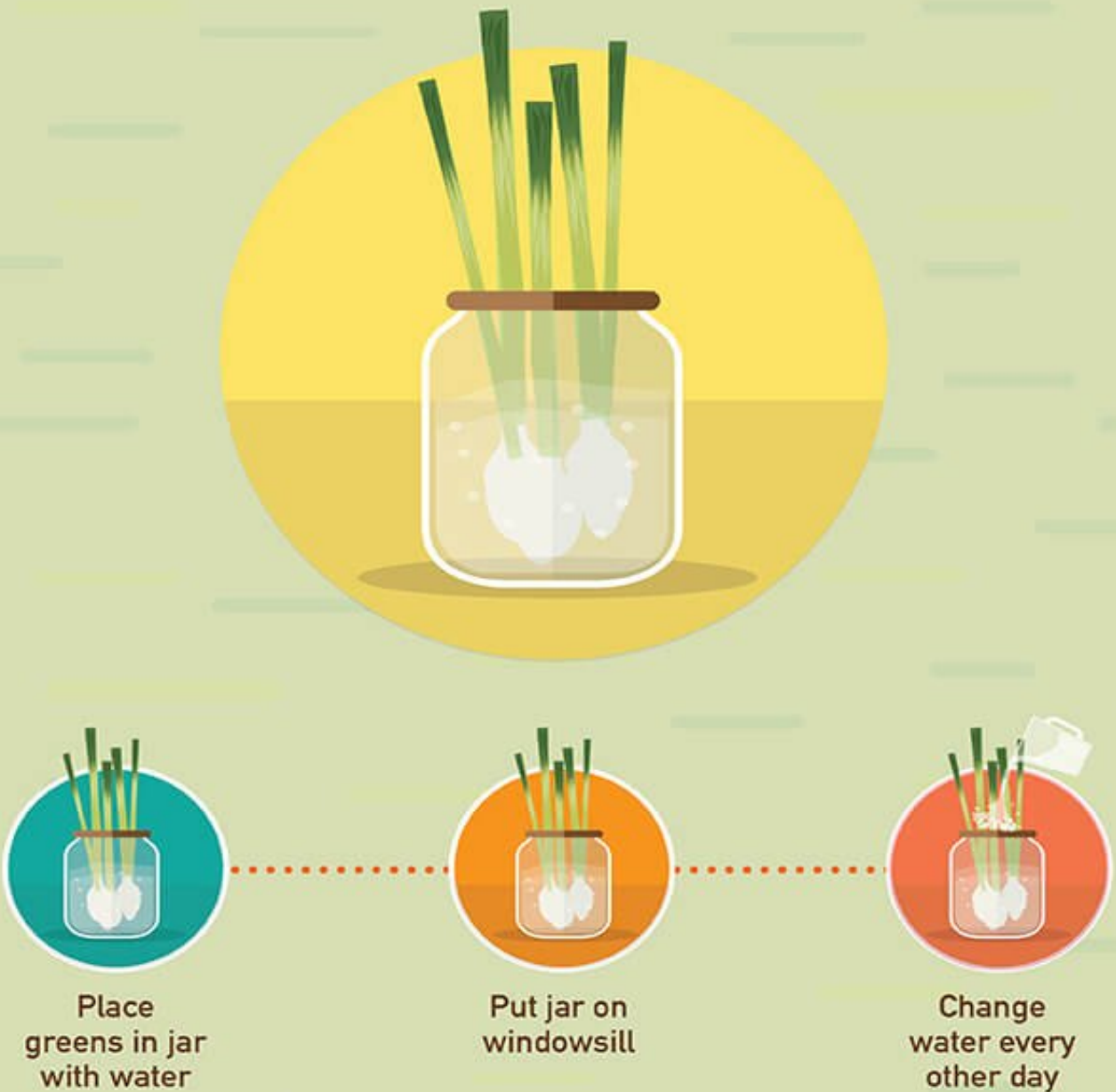


Replant when ginger grows new shoots and roots

Fresh ginger is great to spruce up soups or stir fries, but it can also be pricey. Have your ginger and grow it too from an existing rhizome. Just pull off a piece of ginger from a fresh chunk and place it in potting soil with the smallest buds facing down. Plant ginger in a garden plot or planter that receives only indirect sunlight. The ginger will grow new shoots and roots.

When it's ready to harvest, pull up the entire plant, including the roots. Remove a piece of the rhizome and replant again to continue reaping the rewards.

Green Onions, Leeks, and Scallions



Instead of tossing the green part of these veggies, use them to grow more. Place the greens in a cup or recycled jar filled with water. Put the cup or jar on a windowsill and change the water every other day. In about a week, you should have a new green onion, leek, and/or scallion to add to your supper. [Harvest](#) when fully grown—just make sure to leave the roots in the water.

Hot Peppers



Harvest
seeds from
peppers



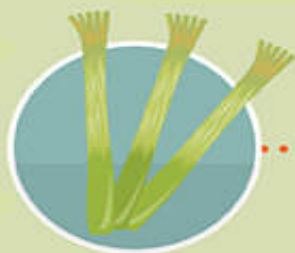
Plant
in soil



Place in a
sunny area

Harvest the seeds from your favorite spicy peppers and plant them in soil in a sunny area. Peppers tend to grow fast, so get your pickling materials ready. Once you have a new crop, save the seeds so you can repeat the process.

Lemongrass



Cut off
tops of
lemongrass
bunch



Place stalks
in jar or tall
glass with
water



Change
water every
few days



When stems
develop strong
root growth, plant
stalks in pot or
garden

A frequent component of Thai dishes, lemongrass is a great addition to marinades, stir-fries, spice rubs, and curry pastes. To grow your own from scraps, cut off the tops of a bunch of lemongrass and place the stalks in water. Change the water every few days. In approximately two or three weeks, you should see new roots.

When the stems have developed strong root growth, plant the stalks in a pot or garden (preferably in an area that receives lots of sun). Because lemongrass needs to stay warm year round, plant the stalks in a container that can be moved inside during the winter months. Harvest lemongrass once it reaches [one foot in height](#); just cut off the amount you need, being careful not to uproot the plant.

Mushrooms



Remove
mushroom
caps



Plant stalks in soil
(cover everything but
the very top)

Be a fungi (or gal) and grow your own mushrooms from scraps. Start by removing the mushroom's cap; you only need the stalk. Plant the stalks in soil and cover everything except for the very top of the stalks. Harvest your mushrooms when fully grown.

Onions



Place onion
bottom in soil



Once roots appear, remove
old onion bottom and
allow roots to grow

Here's another simple one. Just place an onion bottom in the ground and it will regenerate its roots. Once roots appear, remove the old onion bottom and allow the roots to grow. Harvest when onions are fully grown.

Pineapple



Choose a pineapple with green, fresh leaves



Remove top of pineapple by twisting it off



Peel back leaves around base so bottom layers are exposed



Cut off tip of the base, remove any excess fruit



Poke three or four toothpicks into pineapple base, suspend over bowl



Fill bowl with water



Change water every few days



When roots are fully formed, plant pineapple top

Here's one for people who aren't afraid of a long-term commitment. While it can take up to two years for a re-planted pineapple top to bear fruit, the satisfaction of growing your own pineapple is well worth the wait.

Choose a pineapple with [green, fresh leaves](#). Remove the top of the pineapple, ideally by twisting it off (doing so will preserve the parts needed for regrowth). Peel back any leaves around the base so the bottom layers are exposed. Finally, cut off just the tip of the base, being sure to remove any excess fruit.

Next, poke three or four toothpicks into the pineapple base right above the area where you peeled back the leaves. Use the toothpicks to suspend the pineapple top over a glass container. Add enough water to the container to cover the base of the pineapple top. Leave the whole contraption in a sunny area, change the water every few days, and watch for roots to grow.

In about a week, roots should begin to form and the green leaves should be longer and wider. When the roots fully form, plant the pineapple top in a planter (or outdoors if you live in a warm climate). Make sure it is exposed to plenty of sunlight, and water it regularly. Expect a new pineapple to grow in a few months.

Potatoes



**Cut potatoes
into two
pieces**



**Make sure
each half
has at least
1-2 eyes**



**Let pieces sit at
room temperature
overnight until
they are dry
to the touch**



**Plant about
one foot apart
in 8 inches
of soil**

To grow your own potatoes from scraps, cut the potato(s) into two pieces, making sure each half has at least one to two eyes. Let the pieces sit at room temperature overnight or for a few days until they're dry to the touch. Once the potato halves are dry, plant them about one foot apart in 8 inches of soil. When they're fully grown, potatoes can be harvested for several months – even after the plant leaves die!

Pumpkins



Spread out
seeds in
sunny area



Cover seeds
with soil

Plant pumpkin seeds in a garden, spreading out the seeds in a sunny area before covering with soil. Don't feel like harvesting the seeds? Just plant the entire pumpkin by filling it with soil and burying it in a garden. Harvest pumpkins when fully grown, then repeat the process with the new seeds.

Romaine Lettuce



Place bottom of romaine hearts in a bowl with a ½ inch of water



Change water every day



Keep bowl in a sunny area



Once lettuce sprouts, plant hearts in garden

When you chop up hearts of romaine, set aside a few inches from the bottom of the heart. Place in a bowl with about a ½ inch of water. Keep the bowl in a sunny area and change the water every day.

In a few days, you'll start to notice sprouts. Plant the sprouted hearts directly in the garden. If you like the taste of baby greens, you can pinch off outer leaves as the lettuce grows. Otherwise, harvest romaine when it's around 6 to 8 inches tall. If you want to continue growing lettuce, cut the romaine heads off right above the soil line with a sharp knife, leaving the base and root system intact. Otherwise, uproot the whole plant.

Tomatoes



Rinse tomato seeds and allow to dry



Plant in pot with soil



Once sprouts are a few inches tall, transplant them outdoors

Instead of composting the messy insides of tomatoes, save the seeds and plant them. Rinse the seeds off and allow them to dry thoroughly. Next, plant them in rich potting soil in an indoor planter. Once the sprouts are a few inches tall, transplant them outdoors. Be sure to plant the tomatoes in a sunny area and water a few times a week.