

Presented by Anomaly Gardens



# Tomato Baby Care Guide

# Assessment Guide

An assessment consist of examining the plant, its foliage, fruit, soil, and environment.

A picture of Health (ideal findings)

## Plant:

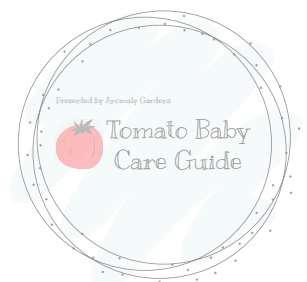
- A healthy tomato plant is robust
- It has thick, soft green leaves that are slightly hairy. Foliage overall is thick but you can still see Light coming through the whole plant, (if you see light, air can move) the leaves are not sitting against the soil, you can clearly see your main stem for the first 6–12 inches of the plant.
- The stems are vibrantly green, strong, and flexible.
- **Blooms** that are bright yellow open and turn into fruit.
- **Fruit** that is shiny, symmetrical, consistently colored, ripens evenly.

## Soil:

- Smells earthy fresh
- Dark in color
- Holds together but falls apart easily
- Holds water after watering remains moist
- Drains well

## Environment:

- Plenty of sunlight with good clean airflow
- Ideally placed against the soil/ground
- Outdoors
- Free and clear of debri and hazards
- Is near other healthy plants or foliage.



# Assessment Guide

Concerning (abnormal) findings:

## Plant:

- Drooping leaves
- Discolored foliage (Yellowing, brown, gray)
- Deformed foliage, chewed, holes, or new growth appears structurally different,
- Lack of new growth, fruit or flowers
- **Flowers** drop off after opening
- **Flowers** yellow and dont open
- **Flowers** dont appear at all
- **Fruit** is discolored, deformed, has holes or spots

## Soil:

- Dry and dusty
- Putrid smelling
- Devoid of life and nutrients
- Compact
- Water logged

## Pests:

- Non beneficial insects are see on the plant
- Damage from non beneficial insects is observed

## Environment:

- Changes from time of initially placing in the environment–Drastic changes in temperature/weather
- Changes to sun pattern– Plant is getting too much/too little sun,
- Changes to immediate surroundings –have the surround plants changed, has the water changed etc

- Record your findings in your care log



# Interventions

From your assessment findings a picture is built, then you decide on a course of action:

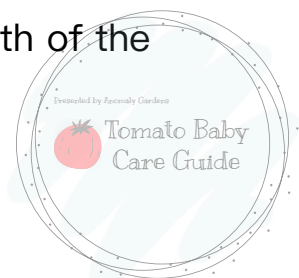
Example: Your assessment findings were dry soil and droopy leaves. Your intervention is watering. You check back the next day and see the leaves are no longer droopy and soil is still moist. Your course of action was successful.

Example: you see your foliage is thick, no light thought it. you move things around notice things flying out of your plant. They almost look like tiny flies. Your plant overall looks healthy. You decide to prune your plant and thin out some of the thick low growing foliage. You return the next day and notice there are almost no flies remaining. Your course of actions as successfully.

## Record

- What you did
- When you did it
- Was it successful
  
- If necessary adjust your basic care plan for the future.
- Be sure to make notes about the adjustments.

**TIPS:** When deciding what to do it is okay to wait and further observe. Sometimes a leaf that looks like it is “sick” is a one off. Sometimes nature corrects itself. You are looking for patterns. Overall you can take whatever approach you are comfortable taking keeping in mind the health of the whole plant.



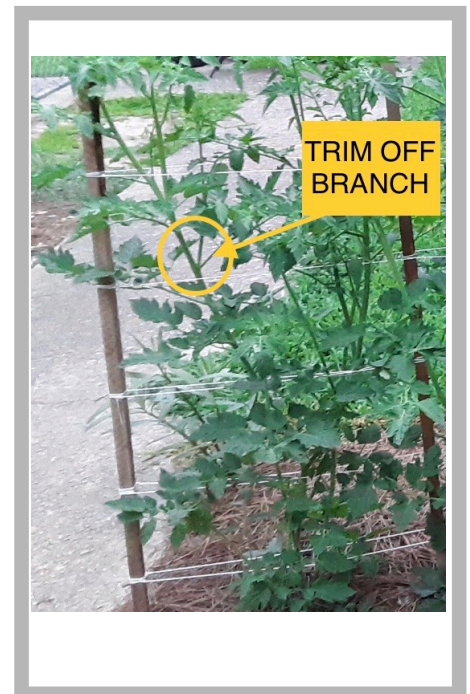
# Pruning Care

How and what to prune:

- Using sharp clean sheers Trim out the dead leaves — Remove any dead or yellowing leaves that you see. This is an easy first step, and will help to clear the clutter so you can focus on pruning the rest.
- Remove the bottom leaves — It's important to remove all of the leaves and lower branches that are touching the ground. This will help to prevent infection from soil-borne diseases, like blight.
- Remove any branches/side shoots coming from the main 6–12 inches above the soil surface.
- Thinning: start from the bottom and locate your main stem, follow it upward. Stop at any overly bushy areas and remove any large leafy branches, or any leafy branch that will not produce flowers and fruit (see Image below on right)
- Cut no more than 1/3 of the total plant foliage



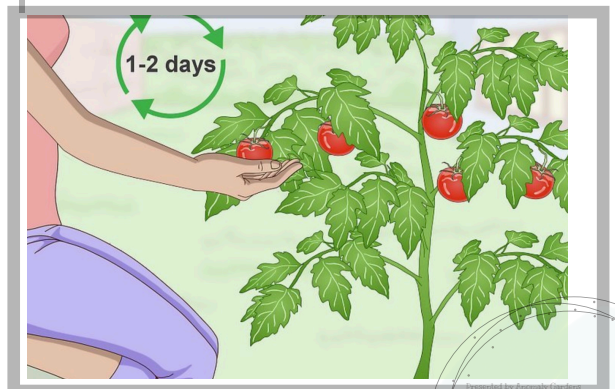
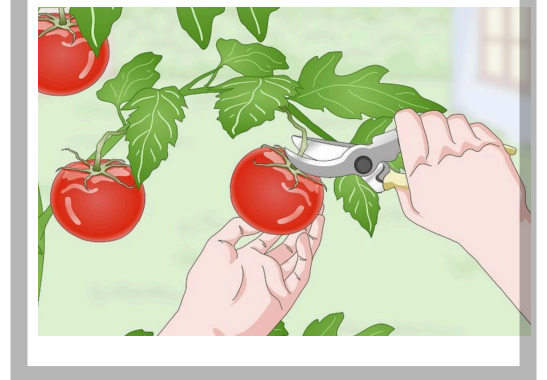
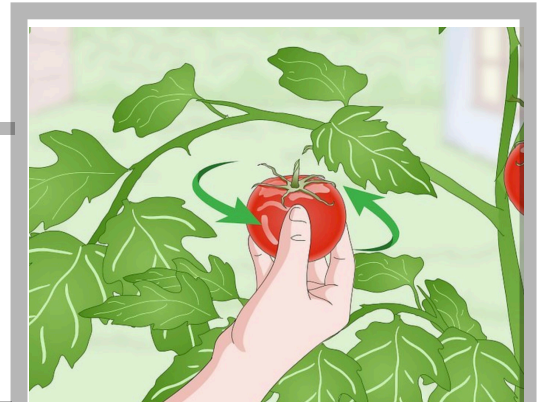
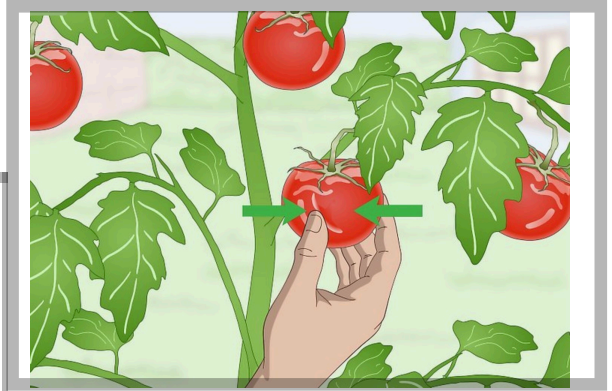
An example of a vine good airflow and leaf spacing from 2nd string up. Vines need additional pruning from second string to ground.





## Harvesting & Storing

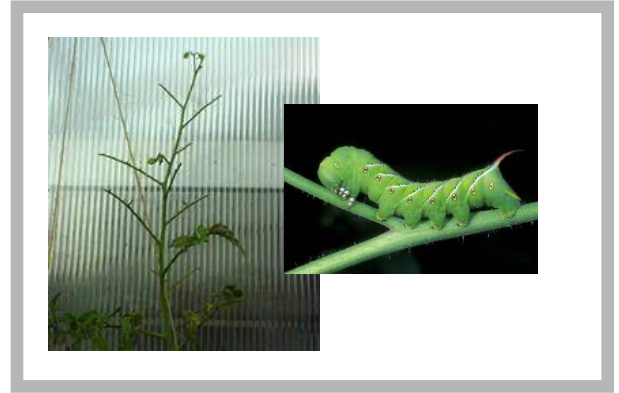
- Although color and smell are helpful the best indicator is the feel
- Firmness is an excellent way to judge whether a tomato is ready to pick. Fully ripe tomatoes should feel slightly tender, but not soft, under a gentle squeeze. That is when they are perfectly ready to eat.
- Smaller tomatoes generally easily pull from the vine when they are ripe, however if they do not, using pruning shears or twisting method to avoid damping the fruit is best
- When fruit stops growing in size it can ripen quickly. Check on your fruit every 1–2 days
- Enjoy tomatoes right away if fully ripe, if harvested before fully ripe they will continue to ripen off the vine. Store in a paper bag or in a fruit basket, do not store in fridge. If possible avoid placing tomatoes in the fridge as it makes them mealy.
- Can't eat them all yourself? Share your bounty with your friends, or place in the freezer to add to cooked meals or sauces



# Pest & Disease ID & Management

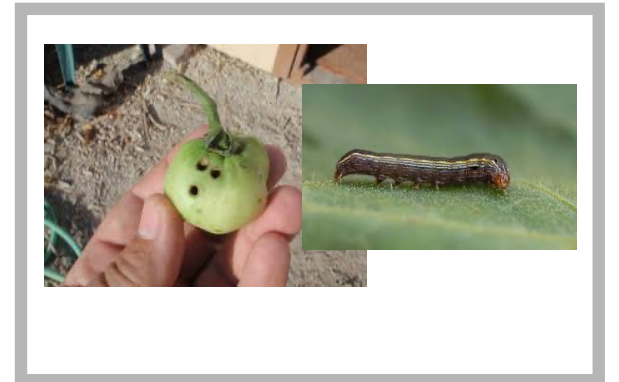
## Tomato Hornworm:

Worms up to four inches long, green with light stripes lengthwise or diagonally on both sides of the body. Worms have a prominent horn on their backs at the hind end. They feed on leaves and gouge out portions of immature fruit. Mature worms burrow into the soil, form a pupa (cocoon) and after a resting period, emerge as adult Sphinx moths. The moths, which are active at night, deposit eggs on tomato plants. To control, hand pick worms or cut in half with pruning shears.



## Tomato Fruit Worm:

Worms up to one and a half inches long. They vary in color from greenish yellow or pink to deep brown with dark stripes on their backs. The undersides are light green or flesh color. Worms feed on foliage and tunnel into fruit. Pick and discard wormy fruit.



## Aphids:

Small soft bodied insects which may be black, green, yellow or pink. They are usually in colonies on leaves and stems. Aphids suck fluids from plant tissues and excrete a sticky liquid called honeydew on which a black sooty mold fungus grows. To reduce infestations, wash plants with a forceful spray of water or spray aphids with insecticidal soap.



## Whiteflies:

Adults are tiny, moth-like insects with powdery white wings and bodies. The young are immobile yellow to greenish scale-like bodies found mostly on the undersides of leaves. Larvae remove sap, which causes leaves to turn yellow. Honeydew, excreted by the larvae, is colonized by sooty mold which blackens the foliage but does not harm it. Plants can sustain moderate infestations of whiteflies and still produce fruit. Contact insecticides are not very effective against whiteflies. For heavy infestations, apply insecticidal soap.





# Pest & Disease ID & Management

## Leaf Hoppers:

Adults are wedge-shaped green insects about 3/8" long. As their name suggests, they will jump off if their plant home or shimmy side to side when disturbed. They cluster along stems and remove sap from the plant. They act as a vector for Curly Top Virus. Spray off with water.



## Leaf Miners:

Slender white, winding tunnels in leaves are produced by the larvae of several species of insects, especially certain tiny flies. The damage that leaf miners cause is seldom a serious problem on tomatoes. Leaf miners are difficult to control with insecticides because the larvae are protected in their leaf mines.



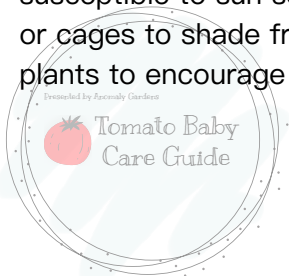
## Mites:

Mites live in colonies, mostly on the underside of leaves, and feed by piercing leaf tissue and sucking up the plant fluids. Feeding marks show up as light dots on the leaves. As feeding continues, the leaves turn yellow and may dry up and drop off. The mites activity is visible in the tight webs that are formed under leaves and along stems.



## Sun Scald:

A yellow or white patch initially develops on the side of green fruit that is exposed to the sun. Varieties that have sparse foliage are more susceptible to sun scald. Support vines with stakes or cages to shade fruit. Water and fertilize young plants to encourage foliage growth.





# Pest & Disease ID & Management

## Powerdery Mildew:

Tomato powdery mildew begins with pale yellow spots on leaves. The spots soon become covered with white spores, which makes the leaves look like they have been dusted with flour. As this fungal disease advances, the whitish parts of the leaves turn brown and shrivel, becoming dry and brittle. fungi clog up leaf pores and block light to photosynthetic cells, so the plants are weakened in their ability to use light as an energy source. New growth stops, old leaves fall off, and the plants struggle to stay alive. Fruits produced by infected plants often lack flavor. Pick off leaves infected with fungus and dispose of away from plants.



## Blight:

Early Blight. Early blight symptoms usually begin after the first fruits appear on tomato plants, starting with a few small, brown lesions on the bottom leaves. As the lesions grow, they take the shape of target-like rings, with dry, dead plant tissue in the center. The surrounding plant tissue turns yellow, then brown before the leaves die and fall off the plant. This disease can spread quickly so acting quickly is necessary. Remove and dispose of all diseased foliage. Mulch soil to prevent spores for landing and last result use fungicide.



# Care Plan

Plant name:

Up Pot Date:



Water frequency:

Maintenance frequency:

Feeding dates:

Date	Significant Findings & Observations	Interventions	Notes: Intervention Results Changes to care plan

