

Genovese Basil

Ocimum basilicum 'Genovese'

At a Glance

Height: 18 to 24 inches tall

Leaf Type: Large, aromatic, classic Italian basil leaves

Bloom Time: Summer (remove flowers to extend harvest)

Days to Maturity: 60-75 days

Best For: Pesto, fresh culinary use, container gardens

Growing Conditions Quick Reference

Soil Temperature: 65-85F for best germination

Soil Type: Rich, well-drained, with organic matter

Light Requirements: Full sun (6-8+ hours daily)

Planting Depth: 1/4 inch deep

Seeding Rate: Thin to one plant every 10-12 inches

Moisture Needs: Keep evenly moist but not waterlogged

Average Germination Time: 5-10 days under warm conditions

How to Grow

When to Plant: Start indoors 4-6 weeks before last frost or direct sow after frost.

Location: Full sun with good air circulation.

Spacing: Thin to 10-12 inches apart.

Watering: Moderate, avoid overhead watering to reduce disease.

Fertilizer: Light feeding with compost or balanced fertilizer every 3-4 weeks.

Tips for Success

Harvest leaves regularly to encourage bushier growth.

Pinch off flower buds to maintain leaf production.

Avoid cold drafts - basil is very frost-sensitive.

Mulch lightly to keep soil warm and retain moisture.

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Fun Fact

Genovese Basil is the traditional variety used in authentic Italian pesto due to its sweet, aromatic flavor and tender leaves.

Companion Planting

Pairs well with tomatoes and peppers, enhancing flavor and repelling pests. Avoid planting near rue or sage as they can inhibit basil's growth.

Harvesting and Use

Harvest by snipping stems just above a leaf node. Use fresh or dry leaves for later. For best flavor, harvest in the morning before the heat of the day.

Quick Planting Checklist

- Start indoors or sow after frost
- Keep soil warm (65-85F)
- Thin seedlings to 10-12 inches apart
- Provide full sun and moderate water
- Pinch flowers to extend harvest
- Harvest regularly for best flavor