



GROWERS GUIDE: GETTING STARTED

Helpful tips on getting your
herb garden going here in the
Maryland area.



FROM ECLIPTA HERBAL

ecliptaherbal.com

SOIL TESTING – the Maryland Extension no longer does soil testing so I sent mine to the UMass Extension. Delaware does them but I think I did UMass. due to a suggestion from a friend.

- U. Mass Extension - soiltest.umass.edu

SEEDS

Strictly Medicinal

<https://strictlymedicalseeds.com/>

Fedco seeds - coop

fedcoseeds.com

Hudson Valley Seed Co.

<https://hudsonvalleyseed.com/>

High Mowing Organic Seeds

highmowingseeds.com

Richters Seeds

<https://www.richters.com/>

TRANSPLANTS & BARE ROOTS

Fedco seeds - coop

fedcoseeds.com

Babikow - wholesale nursery

<https://www.babikow.com/>

PeaceTree Farm, PA

<https://www.peacetreefarm.com/>

COMPOST, SOIL, MULCH, STRAWBALES

Bulk organic soil in yards to be delivered. A cubic yard of soil material can be spread to cover 100 square feet (10×10 foot area) at 3 inches of depth. Always remember to protect your soil by mulching or using cover crops.

- Veterans Compost - <https://www.veterancompost.com/our-products/>
- Hollins Organic - <http://www.hollinsorganic.com/mulch-topsoil-sand-gravel/retail-bulk-products>

Home Composting: I use a Jora Composter because it is insulated which means it gets hot enough that I can compost meat safely. There is no maintenance necessary & it's animal proof. Even with composting all food scraps between 2 people we still have to buy soil every year. I just use the compost we make as fertilizer. www.joracomposters.com

Winter cover crop:

- Oats & peas are most hydrophilic
- Summer cover crop:
- Buckwheat is probably the most water conservative.

Keeping soil moist:

- Mulch
- Coconut coir peat - super hydrophilic
- Plant comfrey in the fall using coconut coir to cover the beds. Comfrey will sprout in spring while never needing to be watered or weeded.

Drainage:

- Pine fines
- Pumice
- Stones, gravel, etc.

SEEDLING MIX

It's always recommended to not skimp on seedling mix. You want those little seeds to all have the best chance possible. If you are in the Baltimore area I go to Greenfields off of Falls Rd.



GROW LIGHTS

- Barrina - <https://barrina-led.com/products/t5-led-grow-light-1ft-5w-5000k-4-packs-m05c5>

INDOOR GREENHOUSE - there are many other great options too but this is the one I have.

- GENESIS 4 Tier Portable Rolling Greenhouse with Clear Cover GEN-4PVC - <https://planetgreenhouse.com/products/genesis-4-tier-portable-rolling-greenhouse-with-clear-cover>

SEEDLING TRAYS

- 10 Pack Seed Starter Kit, 72 Cell Seedling Trays https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07WPT1637/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1

BUILDING BEDS

- Cheapest & often free option but not very long lasting (3-4years): calling an arborist who wouldn't mind dropping off some small to medium sized logs you could build beds with.
- Medium expense: I haven't tried these but they seem great. Corrugated metal raised beds - <https://vegogarden.com/>
- Most expensive but most long lasting are stone beds
 - o Badolato Stone Supply - I bought the colonial wall stone from here. They are organic in shape but thick & flat. Pretty easy to stack 2-4 of them for about 12-16" height without any kind of mortar. <http://www.badolatostone.com/>

WATER

- Don't use tap water on seedlings especially (due to chlorine)
- Water filter - Rule of thumb is that plants like rain water best or surface water not tap water. However, if you need to use water coming from your tap via a backyard hose (which honestly most people do so no worries) you can use a hose water filter or fill large empty 5-gallon (or larger) buckets of water from the tap and allow the water to aerate for a couple days. All tap water in the U.S. is unfortunately high in chlorine & therefore lacks beneficial bacteria. Plants love water that is alive! I bought this hose attachment: ICEPURE RV Water Filter System for Garden (on Amazon).
- Rain Catchment System - We don't currently have one but will be implementing a rain catchment system soon.
- Pond - A backyard pond using tap water with at least an aeration motor allows chlorine to gas off & gain beneficial bacteria. To avoid stagnation, it helps to aerate the water by daily stirring or installing a fountain. Of course, you also need to think about maintain and if this will contribute to mosquito habit.
- Cover crops - Cover crops hold water.
- Look for subterranean aquifers on your property.

WHEN TO WATER

- Late afternoon & at night. If fungal diseases are likely then in the early morning.
- If you need to water during the day water down at the base of the plant. Water on the leaves in the hot sun will burn the leaves.

PEST MANAGEMENT - the main garden dis-harmonies that I've been dealing with are spider mites really taking over a lot of my aromatic herbs like Sage, Catnip & Lemon Balm. I've been able to keep them under control by spraying them with this organic grower's insect spray & then introducing beneficial mites.

- Natures Good Guys - www.naturesgoodguys.com - they are on the Pacific coast but deliver live insects in 24-48hrs.
- Year-Round Horticultural Spray Oil® - <https://summitchemical.com/products/year-round-horticultural-spray-oil/>
- Poor Boy's in Parkville, MD just started selling beneficial insects but not sure if they have mites. - <https://poorboysgardencenter.com/>

