

10 Easy Herbs to GROW, USE, & SAVE

Basil annual

Grow in pot or garden bed, pinch flower tips to get best production. Use leaves fresh in Caprese or pesto. Store by drying, making pesto, or herb butter.

Chives annual/perennial

Grow in pot or garden bed, harvest individual blades anytime. Use leaves fresh in soups, salads, dips, soft cheeses, or store by making herb butter.

Cilantro annual

Grow in pot or garden bed. Use fresh in salsa or guacamole, toss in at the end of a stirfry, noodle dish, or curry, or make pesto using cilantro leaves instead of Basil.

Lavender perennial (not winter hardy)

Thought of for it's aromatic qualities, but the flowers can be dried and made into tea, added to lemonade, or used to flavor sugar or ice cream.

Mint perennial

Grow in a pot and divide each spring to make more-it will take over a garden bed. Use leaves fresh in Mediterranean salads, smoothies, beverages of all kinds, dry for tea, or chop and freeze in ice cubes.

Oregano perennial

Grow in pot, it can take over a garden bed. Used commonly in Italian and Greek foods-chopped fresh over salads, in sauces, and added into vinaigrette dressing. Oregano can also be stored as a pesto, herb butter, or dried.

Parsley annual

Grow in pot or garden bed. Very green and fresh flavor for more than a garnish. Parsley goes well with pasta, sauces, salad, and marinades. Best saved in pesto sauce or herb butter.

Rosemary perennial (not winter hardy)

Grow in a pot that can be brought in for winter. Use to flavor roasted meats or vegetables, rosemary potatoes, rosemary on pizza, rosemary cheese straws, even use stems as toothpicks or skewers to impart subtle flavor. Save the freshness in flavored olive oil or herb butter with garlic and pepper flakes.

Sage perennial

Grow in pot or garden bed. Sage goes beautifully with fat and heavy meats and cheeses, Sage brown butter is a simple and delicious topping for pasta, soup, or fish. Save by drying or making herb butter.

Thyme perennial (sometimes winter hardy)

Grow in pot or garden bed. Use fresh with veggies or cook into corn bread or cookies. Use dried with pasta sauces, soups, and pizza topping. Add early in cooking to release the oils. Save easily by drying or making Herb Butter, cheese spread, or oil.

Tips on drying herbs

Cut long stems of the plant just before flowering for best flavor, if possible. Clean and remove bruised or browned leaves. Use twist tie to bundle 5–7 of them together and hang upside down in a room where it's warm and dry. Cover with a paper bag or mesh bag. Alternatively lay out on a tea towel that is on a cooling rack. When the herb crumbles it is dry and can be transferred into a clean dry jar. Soft leaved herbs like Basil, Parsley, Mint, Cilantro have a tendency to brown in drying and are better preserved in other ways or by using a dehydrator.

Definitions

Annual: A plant that lasts one season—usually does well from seed and needs soil rich in organic matter and regular water.

Perennial: A plant that can come back many years given the right care or zone.

Herb Butter

For every 1/4 cup of softened butter add 1 Tablespoon of herbs. Mix well.

Can be frozen in logs wrapped in cling film or pressed into an ice cube tray- once frozen pop out of tray and put in freezer bag.

pasta: stir in butter just before serving (basil & garlic butter with pasta & tomatoes)

bread: slice thick slices from a fresh loaf of bread, spread with herb butter and bake

veggies: add a dollop to hot veggies right before serving

grilled meat: grill meat as always, allow to rest then add a pat of herb butter

baked potatoes

salmon: grill or bake your salmon then add add a pat of dill and lemon herb butter

Insert herb butter under the skin of chicken/ turkey as your prepping to bake it in the oven

Pesto basic

4 cups fresh basil leaves or other herbs can be added or substituted

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/3 cup pine nuts or almonds

2 garlic cloves

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan

1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt

Blend until smooth.

Freezing pesto trick-blend just the herb and oil into a thick paste and spoon 3–4 Tablespoons into a freezer sandwich bag, press flat to squeeze out the air and freeze flat. When you want to make pesto—this defrosts quickly and you can blend it with the rest of the fresh ingredients.

Herb-infused oil

1. Prepare your jar. Make sure the jar is clean and very dry. Again, any water in the jar can lead to spoilage.

2. Fill the jar half way with dry herbs.

3. Pour extra virgin olive oil over the herbs slowly. Using a chopstick or knife, move the herbs around to make sure all air pockets are filled with oil. Add enough oil to completely cover all the herbs, filling right up to the brim of the jar.

4. Cover the jar, give it a few shakes, and put it in a cool place inside your house. Every now and then, give your jar a shake. It will be ready to use in 3–6 weeks. The jar may ooze or leak a little, so place it on a plate or towel.

5. Strain the oil into your storage bottles through a cloth-lined strainer. Give the herbs a final few squeezes to get the last of that herb-soaked goodness.

6. Cork and label your bottles.

Drizzle oil on veggies, meat, pasta, even ice cream for a unique treat.



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