

Growing Tomatoes



SUNLIGHT

- **Tomato plants need full sun** (at least 6-8 hours). If your garden gets less sun, find the brightest spot and try cherry tomatoes.



SOIL & PLANTING

- **The ideal planting time** is when soil temperature reaches 60°F for several days and night temperatures are above 50°F.

Planting in Containers

- Use premium organic potting mix like **G&B Organic Potting Soil** or **Baby Bu's Potting Soil**. For an added kick, add worm castings and organic fertilizer.
- **Container size:** For indeterminate varieties, use a 15-gallon nursery container (holds 2 cu. ft. potting soil) or larger. For determinate varieties (shorter plants), use a 5-gallon nursery container (holds almost 1 cu. ft. potting soil) or larger.

Planting in Native Soil & Raised Beds

- Add 30–50% compost to existing soil: **G&B Harvest Supreme**, **G&B Soil Building Conditioner**, or **Malibu Compost**
- Add **DIY Tomato Planting Mix** to bottom of planting hole and mix with soil and compost. Remove lowest few leaves from the stem; plant tomato several inches deeper, burying main stem.
 - » **DIY Tomato Planting Mix Recipe** (also great for peppers, squash, and eggplant): ½ cup bone meal, ½ cup dolomite lime, ¼ cup organic vegetable fertilizer, 1–2 handfuls worm castings, 1 shovelful **G&B Harvest Supreme**



WATER

- **How:** Thorough, deep watering at regular intervals is key for in-ground and container plants.
- **When:** Water when foliage droops in cool morning; drooping in mid-morning or afternoon heat is not indicative of water needs. Frequency and duration varies based on growing conditions—more water is needed in hotter, drier periods.



FERTILIZER

- **When:** Apply every 4–6 weeks; follow label instructions.
- **What:** Use granular/pelletized, organic, slow-release fertilizer for complete nutrition (**G&B Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Blend**). Supplemental liquid feeding is helpful for young plants.



PESTS & DISEASE

- **Prevent blossom-end rot** (hard, dark patch at blossom end of fruit) by adding calcium to soil during planting. Provide steady, consistent watering to stop blossom-end rot before it starts.
- **Tomatoes are fairly pest-resistant, but can attract** aphids, white flies, flea beetles, spider mites, and little green worms. To treat, spray off plants with a jet of water or use organic products. Minimize stress and pests by consistently using organic fertilizer to maintain plant health.



SUPPORT

- **Trellises, cages, or stakes** are necessary to keep vining tomatoes off the ground:
 - » Indeterminate tomato plants require a larger cage.
 - » For determinate plants, a medium cage is sufficient.
 - » Hanging basket varieties do not require staking.
- **Stake** the same day you plant to avoid damaging new roots.
- **Thinning is optional** and can be done based on support. Do not remove too much foliage—fruits can sunburn!



FLAVOR

- **Plant nutrition** affects tomato taste! Stress like pests, disease, and weather can lead to “off flavors”. Fertilize to maintain flavor.
- **Overwatering** can lead to watery-tasting fruit; liquids dilute sugars in the plant’s vascular system.
- **Harvest fruit** 24–48 hours after watering; allows more sugar to be stored in the fruit and trapped when harvested.
- **Store tomatoes** at room temperature. Do not put freshly harvested tomatoes in refrigerator; this destroys the delicate flavor by turning sugars to starch.



VARIETIES

- **Cherry Tomatoes:** Sungold, SunSugar, Chocolate Cherry, Isis Candy, Snow White, Golden Sweet
- **Beefsteak/Large Slicer:** Brandywine, Mortgage Lifter, Pineapple, Amana Orange
- **Salad/Medium Slicer:** Black Krim, Goliath
- **Paste Tomatoes:** San Marzano, Roma
- **Cold-Tolerant Early:** Bloody Butcher, Moskovitch, Stupice