

## How To Be Successful With Seeds ... by Marilyn Holt

Seeds are an economical way to increase plants in your garden, usually at a cost of 10¢ to 40¢ per plant. Unfortunately most people are intimidated because of low germination and there is a good reason - improper treatment of the seed.

It is amazing how many people do not know that seeds, as in humans, require different conditions to sprout and thrive. Some seeds require light to germinate, some need total darkness to germinate and some don't really care and will germinate either way. To help increase your success with seeds, I have put together the "need light" and "need dark" lists but first, a little explanation.

One of the functions of dormancy is to prevent a seed from germinating before it is surrounded by a favourable environment. Various treatments are performed on the seed to break dormancy and begin germination.

Seed scarification involves breaking, scratching, or softening the seed coat so that water can enter and begin the germination process. There are several ways to scarify seeds, i.e. acid bath, boiling water soak, files, nail clippers or emery boards, and chilling.

### FLOWER, VEGETABLE & HERB SEEDS THAT NEED LIGHT TO GERMINATE:

This means sprinkle the seed on TOP of your soil mix, gently water them and leave them alone - do NOT cover them with soil. The amazing part of all this is that very seldom do the seed packets say that on the instructions on the back of the package.

Common Name	Latin Name
Ageratum	Ageratum houstonianum
Balloon Flower	Platycodon grandiflorus
Basket of Gold	Alyssum montanum
Begonia	Begonia species
Bellflower	Campanula species
Bells of Ireland	Molucella laevis
Blanket Flower	Gaillardia x grandiflora
Browallia	Browallia speciosa
Coleus	Coleus x hybridus
Columbine	Aquilegia species and hybrids
Coreopsis	Coreopsis grandiflora
Creeping Zinnia	Sanvitalia procumbens
Dill	Anethum graveolens
Feverfew	Chrysanthemum parthenium
Flowering cabbage	Brassica oleracea acephala
Impatiens	Impatiens wallerana
Leopard's Bane	Doronicum cordatum
Lettuce	Lactuca sativa
Maltese Cross	Lynchis chalconica
Mexican sunflower	Tithonia rotundiflora
Mignonette	Reseda odorata
Nicotiana	Nicotiana glauca
Oriental Poppy	Papaver orientale
Ornamental Pepper	Capsicum annuum
Petunia	Petunia x hybrida
Primrose	Primula species except P. sinensis
Rock Cress	Arabis species
Salvia	Salvia species (red flowered)

Savory	Satureja species
Snapdragon	Antirrhinum majus
Shasta Daisy	Chrysanthemum x superbum
Stock	Mathiola species
Strawflower	Helicrysum bracteatum
Sweet Alyssum	Lobularia maritime
Sweet Rocket	Hesperis matronalis
Transvaal Daisy	Gerbera Jamiesonii hybrids
Yarrow	Achillea species

### FLOWER, VEGETABLE & HERB SEEDS THAT NEED DARKNESS TO GERMINATE:

Must be covered with soil to make sure light cannot penetrate your growing medium. I plant to the depth called for on the seed package then use a thick layer of newspaper on top of the pot or tray to block out any light.

Common Name	Latin Name
Bachelor's Buttons	Centaurea cyanus
Borage	Borago officinalis
Butterfly Flower	Schizanthus x wisetomensis
Calendula, Pot Marigold	Calendula officinalis
Chinese Primrose	Primula sinensis
Coriander	Coriandrum sativum
Delphinium	Delphinium species
Chinese Forget-Me-Not	Cynoglossum amabile
Fennel	Foeniculum species
Forget-Me-Not *	Myosotis species
Gazania	Gazania rigens
Larkspur	Consolida ambigua
Nasturtium	Tropaeolum majus
Nemesia	Nemesia strumosa
Painted Tongue	Salpiglossis sinuata
Periwinkle aka Vinca	Catharanthus roseus
Phlox	Phlox species
Poor Man's Orchid	Schizanthus x wisetomensis
Poppy	Papaver species except P. orientale
Salpiglossis	Salpiglossis sinuata
Sweet Pea	Lathyrus odoratus
Verbena, Vervain	Verbena species
Violet, Violet, Pansy	Viola species

### SEEDS THAT REQUIRE SOAKING:

Use hot water that is between 170° to 212°F and leave the seeds in the water, allowing it to cool, for twelve to twenty-four hours.

Asparagus	Asparagus officinalis
Mallow	Hibiscus species
Morning Glory	Ipomoea species
Okra	Abelmoschus esculentus
Perennial Pea	Lathyrus latifolius
Sweet Pea	Lathyrus odoratus
Muscari	Liriope Muscari
Lupine	Lupinus species
Parsnips	Pastinaca sativa
Parsley	Petroselinum crispum
Thrift, Sea Pink	Armeria maritime

Cont'd. →

## How To Be Successful With Seeds, cont'd ...

### SEEDS THAT NEED COLD TREATMENT:

For small seeds, use a shallow pan, add your soil, seed and water lightly. Place the pan in a Ziploc bag in your refrigerator and leave for three to eight weeks. Make sure you constantly check the pan as sometimes seed will germinate and these will have to be removed and put in a warmer place to grow on.

For larger seed like Daylily you can use a lunch Ziploc bag. Put in your seed and some damp peat moss and refrigerate. Again check often to remove any seed that sprout, making sure to plant them immediately and not let them dry out. Remember some will not germinate in the refrigerator so after the three to eight week period, remove them from the fridge and plant them.

Remember to label and date the seeds you have chilling and also remember to check the sprouting medium to make sure it is damp (not soaking wet).

Common Name	Latin Name
Angelica	Angelica Archangelica
Bleeding Heart	Dicentra spectabilis
Christmas Rose	Helleborus niger
Columbine	Aquilegia species and hybrids
Daylily	Hemerocallis hybrids
Gas Plant	Dictamnus albus
Globeflower	Trollius europaeus
Lavender	Lavandula angustifolia
Ornamental Cabbage	Brassica Oleracea Acephala
Phlox	Phlox paniculata
Primrose	Primula species
Tahoka Daisy	Machaeranthera tanacetifolia
Trillium	Trillium ovatum
Viola, Violet, Pansy	Viola species

Mentioned before but worth mentioning again - use chamomile tea instead of 'No Damp' for an organic solution.