

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Humulus

Humulus is commonly known as hops. The hops are commonly used for brewing beer and they are what gives the beer its balance and depth, as well as adding bitterness. These plants are considered a rapidly growing perennial bine. A bine climbs with the help of stiff hairs, unlike that climbs by using its tendrils to grab hold of objects. Hops are hardy in USDA hardiness zones 4-8, and they can reach up to 30 feet tall in only one year.

To plant:

There are more than 12 varieties of hops, all that produce different-tasting beers and all of which have different qualities, so the first place to start is deciding which type of hop you will be planting. Hops can live up to 50 years, so be sure to plant them in a space you don't mind them living in for a while. To support the bines, run a string down from your roof so the bines have something to latch onto. When it comes to planting the hops, plant three to six rhizomes two inches below the soil's surface and space them three to five feet apart. Make sure the shoots face upward.

To grow:

Mature hops plants will require root pruning each spring, and the plant also will need to be trained to climb. Don't train them on a cloudy or cooler day because the plant is more brittle then. Trim the untrained shoots to the ground and apply mulch around the base of the plant to keep the weeds down. Make sure you water them plenty, because hops require a lot of water, especially in their first year. It is best to establish a drip-irrigation system.



[Humulus seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

To harvest:

Hops are grown so they can be harvested, and a common mistake novice gardeners make is harvesting the cones too early. Hops are ripe when the cones are light, dry and spring back easily when squeezed lightly. They should smell like a mix between cur grass and an onion. For the first year, pick the cones off the bine and don't cut the bine until it does. Following years, cut the bine down completely to harvest the hops.

What Humulus craves:

Hops plants do well when fertilized correctly. Apply a nitrogen-heavy fertilizer to the plants in the late spring or early summer, and it can be applied as a commercial fertilizer, manure or organic matter. Phosphorous fertilizer isn't exactly needed nor does it typically benefit the hops plants, but potassium does. Potassium ensures the cone production is healthy, and it also benefits the bine



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and foliage health. If the soil has a low potassium consistency, fertilize with 80-120 pounds of potassium per acre of hops.

Where to buy *Humulus* seeds:

You can find a climbing variety of hops that produces green flowers that are usually used for brewing beer on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Humulus seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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