

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

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

Chives are an easy-to-grow herb that can add a punch of flavor to many dishes. Both onion and garlic chives can be grown and used in the kitchen. Chives are a member of the lily family with flavorful leaves and flowers, which bloom purple. The flowers are edible as well and can be floated in soups. Chives grow best in clumps, and they can be grown in small pots for a container garden. The leaves of onion chives are hollow and the leaves of garlic chives are flat.

To plant:

Chives can be planted from seed or from divisions. The herb grows best if planted from divisions, which means finding a clump of chives and taking a small portion of that clump to plant in a separate area. Dig up a portion of the clump in early spring or mid fall and transplant to the desired location. The transplant should have at least five bulbs. If planting from seed, plant the seed ¼ inch deep and water well. Chives can be grown outdoors or indoors near a window. If planting inside, keep the pot in a dark area until the seeds sprout, and then move to a windowsill. Begin chives indoors eight weeks before the last frost. Transplant chives to the garden when the sprouts reach 6 inches in height. If planting seeds directly outside, wait until all dangers of frost have passed.

To grow:

Chives prefer full sun but can tolerate partial shade, especially in warmer climates. They grow best in well-drained soil with a pH of 6.0 to 7.0. Once seeds sprout, thin to 4 inches apart between plants.



[Common Chive seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

Water chives consistently and add mulch to retain moisture and deter weeds. Chives are perennial plants, and they are more productive if frequently divided. Every three years, divide the plants in the spring. Chives grow well next to carrots. In addition to growing well in pots, chives are often planted as a border along an herb or flower garden.

To harvest:

To encourage more leaves on the chive plant, pinch off the flower bud. Chives are ready to harvest as soon as the leaves are long enough to clip and use in the kitchen.

Cut the chives from the outside of the clump, leave a half-inch of stem. Chives are ready to harvest typically 60 days after planting the seeds.

What chives crave:

Prior to planting the chives, mix 4 to 6 inches of organic compost into the soil and apply 2



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to 3 tablespoons of an all-purpose fertilizer, 16-16-8, per square foot of planting area. If you frequently harvest the chives, fertilize every other week with plant food or fish emulsion.

Where to buy chive seeds:

Urban Farmer sells onion chives that can grow up to 1.5 feet tall and 12 inches wide. Check out chive seeds on our website at [ufseeds.com!](http://ufseeds.com)



[Common Chive seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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