

General Propagation Techniques

Seed-Starting

Usual Seed-Starting Recipe: 64°-70°, light fluffy soil kept moist, transplant when seedling has 'true leaves'

BUT: *Some like it colder

*Some need **scarification**, seed-coat breaking, through hot water, acids, or a good rub with sand-paper

*Some need **stratification**, a dormancy period, usually of cold temperatures, before they'll start to germinate.

Seed-Saving

Pick a healthy plant with qualities you like to save seed from, hybrids won't be true. Some seeds (like mint) will never be true either.

Watch out for incest! If another family member is flowering you'll get a mystery seed. **Learn your families.**

Compositae: Chicory, Endive, Salsify, Dandelion, Jerusalem & Globe Artichokes.

Cucurbits: Cucumbers, Gourds, Melons, Squash.

Goosefoot: Beets, Chard, Spinach.

Grasses: Rye, Sweet Corn, Popcorn.

Legumes: All Peas and Beans.

Lily: Garlic, Onions, Leeks, Shallots, Chives

Mallow: Okra, Lavatera

Mustards: Cabbage, Collards, Brussels Sprouts, Kale, Cauliflower, Broccoli, Kohlrabi,

Turnips, Cress, Radish, Horseradish

Parsley: Carrots, Parsley, Celery, Parsnip

Solanaceous /Nightshades: Eggplant, Peppers, Potatoes, Tomatoes

Seed-gathering: let dry completely. For fleshy fruit let over-ripen then 'rot' in jar with water just long enough for seeds to float to top, then dry.

Seed-storage: Once seeds are fully dry, store in an airtight container in a cool dark place. Some may need stratification (see above).

Self-seeders:

Good self-seeders that only need occasional transplanting: walking onions, calendula, nasturtium, leeks, kale, tomatoes (though late in season), parsley, borage, mustard.

Heirloom:

Seed strains adapted to local conditions

Open-Pollinated:

Strains that are 'true to type', produce plants like their parents. Non-hybrids.

Cloning= reproducing exactly, faster than seeds

Division (many herbs, water plants, spreading plants): divide by sawing, snipping daughters off, or prying apart with two garden forks.

Layering (many berries and shrubs): pin down runner or branch tip to ground, come back next season and see if it's rooted.

Cuttings (many herbs and shrubs): Snip to angled bottom and only a bit of upper leaf. Dip in root-hormone stimulator (can be willow water). Make medium of 3 parts sand to 1 part peat/coconut coir. Be gentle inserting cuttings. Keep medium moist and avoid strong sun/drying out of plants.

Softwood cuttings (this year's growth): tender stem with 5 or so nodes

Hardwood cuttings (last year's growth): 8" or so, usually cultured outdoors

Live staking (willows, ribes, many tropical plants): cuttings that will root when poked straight into the ground.

Grafting= combining two plants

Usually one is good tree structure and the other bears a good fruit. Also can be used to graft an edible fruit to a native or ornamental tree base.

Combine Rootstock...: Usually forms the roots and base of the tree. Often the 'M + number' or 'G + number' name. This choice has the biggest influence on tree size and adaptation to different soils.

...With Scionwood: Usually forms the upper/fruited part of the tree. The 'variety' name. One tree can bear many different types of scionwood/varieties.

Types of grafts:

Whip: Elongated to expose more cambium. Done in late winter with rootstock and scionwood of same size.

Whip and tongue: Tongue added to structurally support the graft. Done in late winter with rootstock and scionwood of same size.

Cleft: Rootstock split and filled with scionwood. Can be done when rootstock is much wider in diameter than scion. Also late winter.

Bud: Scionbud is inserted into the rootstock cambium. Can be done in early summer.*