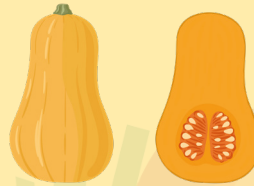


# Squash (Winter)



**Sun:** Plant in full sun (6 to 8 hours). Space 36 inches apart within rows or 1 plant per 5- to 7-gallon container. Plant in April after any danger of frost has passed and mid-July through the first of August.

**Soil:** Amend with organic matter to create a well-drained soil. Avoid planting in unamended sandy or heavy clay soils. If the soil test shows pH is below 6.2, apply lime in January or February as recommended. If the pH is above 6.2, apply a pH-neutral calcium supplement, such as gypsum. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup gypsum per plant to prevent blossom-end rot.

If growing in a container garden, amend each pot with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup gypsum. For proper drainage, use potting mix and ensure containers have drainage holes. Alternatively, consider using self-watering containers.

**Water:** Keep soil consistently moist but not saturated. Apply 1 to 2 inches of water each week and more during hot summer days. Avoid wetting leaves to prevent fungal disease. Mulch helps retain moisture.

**Plant:** Direct sow seeds 1 inch deep. When sprouts are 4 to 5 inches tall, thin plants to 12 inches apart. Plants will not grow well or produce if overcrowded. Transplants are not recommended.

**Fertilize:** In the absence of a soil test, apply all-purpose fertilizer (8-8-8 or 10-10-10) at planting, according to label directions. Reapply beside plants, 4 to 6 inches from the stem (side-dress), when vines begin to run.

**Insects/Diseases/Weeds:** Scout plants frequently for insect/disease damage. Use insecticidal soap (for soft-bodied insects) or Bt dust or spray (for caterpillars, or worms). Spray fungicide regularly to suppress common fungal diseases. Always follow label instructions. Mulch inhibits weeds and diseases.

**Harvest:** Harvest at 85 to 100 days, when fruits are full size, rind is relatively tough and glossy, and the bottom of the fruit is cream to orange in color. Harvest time varies depending on the variety.

**Other:** Winter squash plants are very large plants and are normally planted in hills 15 to 36 inches apart.

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