

Strawberries



Sun: Plant in full sun (6 to 8 hours). Space 12 inches apart in rows or 4 plants per 5- to 7-gallon container. Plant in October for spring harvest.

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

For proper drainage in a container garden, 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 soil moisture.

Plant: Transplants are recommended. When purchasing transplants, choose those with healthy color and a stocky appearance. Avoid plants with flowers or fruit. Dig the planting hole as deep as the root ball and ensure the crown (base of leafy mass) is level with the soil surface (not buried). Firmly pat down the soil and water deeply.

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), about 4 weeks after planting if new plants appear light green or are growing poorly.

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 90 to 100 days, when fruit are totally red. Harvest time varies depending on the variety.

Other: Strawberries are typically bought as transplants as they can take up to 3 years to produce berries. Keep beds free of weeds and ensure consistent soil moisture. Strawberries usually require more water during the height of summer.

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