

Basil

Ocimum basilicum · Mint family

DIFFICULTY Easy
TYPE Annual, warm season
MATURITY 50–60 days



SUN
Full sun, warm



WATER
Regular



SOIL PH
6.0–7.0



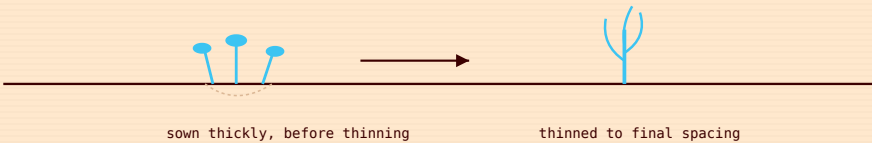
SPACING
20–30cm



DEPTH
0.5cm

01 Pinch to bush out

Regularly pinching out the growing tips — especially any flower spikes — keeps basil bushy and leafy for far longer than leaving it to grow unchecked.



02 Planting

METHOD	Direct sow or transplant seedlings once frost risk has passed.
SOIL	Rich, well-drained.
TIMING	Plant in late spring once nights are reliably warm — basil hates cold.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

03 Growing care

- Pinch out growing tips regularly to encourage bushy growth.
- Remove flower spikes as soon as they appear.
- Water at the base, avoiding wet foliage.
- Harvest from the top down, never stripping a plant bare.

04 Problems

- **Downy mildew** — humid conditions; improve airflow, avoid overhead watering.
- **Aphids** — cluster on new growth; hose off.
- **Bolting** — heat and stress; pinch flower spikes promptly.
- **Slugs and snails** — target seedlings; use barriers.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Usable once plants have several sets of true leaves.
METHOD	Pinch or snip leaves from the top of the plant.
CURING	Air-dry or freeze in oil for storage.
STORAGE	Fresh in a glass of water on the counter, a few days; dried or frozen, months.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying leafy herbs for storage) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.
RECIPES	Try our Basil Pesto — a way to use a glut.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Tomato Capsicum Asparagus	Rue	Fast annual; rotate loosely.