

Tomato

Solanum lycopersicum · Nightshade family

DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Annual (tender perennial), seedling
MATURITY 60–100 days



SUN
Full sun



WATER
Deep, consistent



SOIL PH
6.0–6.8



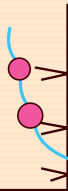
SPACING
45–60cm



DEPTH
deep — bury
lower stem

01 Stake early

Tomatoes are heavy, floppy plants once loaded with fruit. Stake or cage at planting time, not later — disturbing roots after the plant is established sets it back.



staked and loosely tied as it grows

02 Planting

METHOD	Plant seedlings deep, burying part of the stem — buried stem grows extra roots.
SOIL	Rich, well-drained, high organic matter.
TIMING	Plant after frost risk passes and nights are reliably mild.

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

- Stake or cage at planting.
- Water deeply at the base — wet leaves invite fungal disease.
- Remove lower leaves touching soil and side shoots on staked varieties.
- Feed with a potassium-rich fertiliser once fruiting begins.

04 Problems

- **Blight** — dark leaf and stem lesions in humid weather; improve airflow, avoid overhead watering.
- **Blossom end rot** — irregular watering or calcium deficiency; keep watering steady.
- **Fruit fly** — net or bag ripening fruit.
- **Splitting** — heavy rain after a dry spell; mulch to even out soil moisture.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Full colour, slight give when gently squeezed.
METHOD	Twist or cut from the vine, leaving the calyx attached.
CURING	None needed — ripen on a windowsill if picked slightly early.
STORAGE	Room temperature for best flavour, used within a week. Never refrigerate.
PRESERVING	See Canning & Bottling (canning a tomato glut) or Root Cellaring (storing potatoes) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.
RECIPES	Try our Simple Tomato Passata — a way to use a glut.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Basil Carrot Marigold Asparagus	Potato Fennel Brassicas	Avoid following other nightshades for 2–3 years.