Galangal

Alpinia galanga · Ginger family

DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Perennial clumping rhizome
MATURITY 10–24 months

SUN	WATER	SOIL PH	SPACING	DEPTH
Part shade to full sun	Regular and humid	5.5–6.5	70cm apart	5cm

01 Rhizome and shoots

Greater galangal (Alpinia galanga), used in Thai cooking, grows in a clump that can reach two metres. The pale rhizome has ring markings, and young shoots have a pink tinge.



02 Planting

METHOD	Plant a piece of rhizome with at least two growth buds, buds up, 5cm deep. Sprouting can take several weeks.
SOIL	Rich, moist, free-draining soil with lots of compost. Large pots work where space is tight.
TIMING	Plant from September to November once soil is warm and frost is no longer a concern.
SOURCE	Buy from a nursery or Asian grocer; make sure it is Alpinia galanga, as “galangal” can also mean lesser galangal.

> 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

- Keep soil evenly moist and mulch deeply; it likes humid conditions.
- Give protection from frost and strong wind, which shreds the tall leaves.
- Feed in spring and summer with compost or a balanced organic fertiliser.
- Let the clump expand for a year or two, then dig pieces from the outside.

04 Problems

- **Frost** — tender; leaves blacken and rhizomes rot in cold, wet soil, so protect or grow in pots.
- **Rhizome rot** — rhizomes turn soft in waterlogged soil; use well-drained soil and do not overwater.
- **Slow establishment** — plants may take a year or more to give a worthwhile harvest.
- **Snails and caterpillars** — chew young shoots and leaves; check regularly in spring.

Pest and disease pages: Phytophthora Root Rot, Frost Damage, Aphids. Pest and Disease Finder.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	A clump of 1–2 years old with plump rhizomes. Harvest in autumn or winter, when growth slows.
METHOD	Dig around the edge of the clump and lift outer rhizomes, leaving the centre to keep growing.
CURING	Brush off soil and let skin dry for a day. Peeling is only needed for cooking; the skin is tough.
STORAGE	Fresh rhizomes keep 2–3 weeks in the fridge, or slice and freeze for up to 6 months.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying galangal slices for storage) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY

Ginger · Turmeric · Banana

AVOID NEARBY

No strong known conflicts

ROTATION NOTE

A long-lived clump; replant divisions in fresh ground every 3–4 years, away from other gingers.