

Melon

Cucumis melo / *Citrullus lanatus* · Cucurbit family

DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Annual, sown or seedling
MATURITY 80–100 days



SUN
Full sun, warm



WATER
Regular, less as fruit ripens



SOIL PH
6.0–6.8



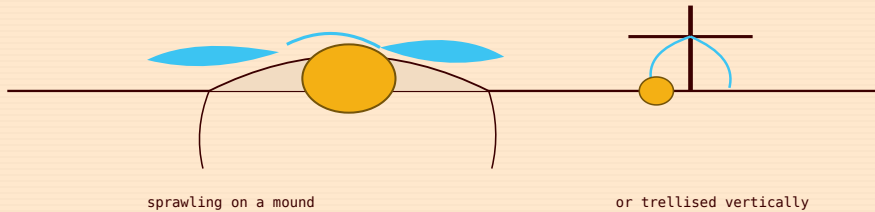
SPACING
1–2m



DEPTH
2–3cm

01 Needs summer heat

Melons want more sustained warmth than pumpkin or zucchini to develop good sweetness — a long, hot summer matters more here than for most cucurbits.



02 Planting

METHOD	Sow or plant seedlings into a warm, rich mound.
SOIL	Rich, well-drained.
TIMING	Plant once soil and nights are reliably warm.

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.

04 Problems

- **Powdery mildew** — humid weather; improve airflow.
- **Fruit fly** — net or bag developing fruit.
- **Poor sweetness** — insufficient heat or too much water near ripening.
- **Poor fruit set** — low pollinator activity; hand-pollinate.

03 Growing care

- Water deeply while fruit is developing, then ease off as it nears ripeness to concentrate sugars.
- Mulch to retain moisture and keep fruit clean.
- Support developing fruit off the ground with a sling if trellised.
- Limit the number of fruit per vine for better size and sweetness.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Rockmelon: fragrant, slips easily from the vine. Watermelon: dull skin, hollow sound when tapped.
METHOD	Cut from the vine rather than pulling.
CURING	None needed.
STORAGE	Room temperature briefly, then fridge once cut.
PRESERVING	See Fermenting (fermented pickles) or Root Cellaring (storing winter squash and pumpkin) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Corn Radish	Potato	Rotate cucurbits on a 3-year cycle.