

Saving Seeds

Grow next year's crop from this year's best plants

DIFFICULTY Moderate

TYPE Seasonal technique

TIME Varies – from minutes to a season



DIFFICULTY
Moderate



TIME
Varies by crop



COST
Free



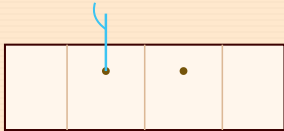
BEST SEASON
At harvest / end
of season



FREQUENCY
Annual

01 Open-pollinated only

Only open-pollinated (non-hybrid) varieties reliably grow true from saved seed — hybrid (F1) seed often produces plants quite different from the parent, so check what you're growing before saving.



seed tray, correct depth



growing on, or a rooted cutting

02 What you'll need

- Open-pollinated or heirloom varieties
- Paper envelopes or jars for storage
- A cool, dry, dark storage spot
- Labels with variety name and year

03 Method

1. Confirm the variety is open-pollinated, not a hybrid.
2. Let seed pods, heads, or fruit mature fully on the plant — well past the eating stage for many crops.
3. Harvest and dry seed thoroughly before storage — damp seed rots or moulds.
4. Clean off chaff and plant debris where practical.
5. Store in a labelled envelope or jar somewhere cool, dry, and dark.

04 Troubleshooting

- **Seed doesn't grow true to type** — likely a hybrid variety, or cross-pollination occurred with a related plant nearby.
- **Seed rots in storage** — wasn't fully dry before storing; ensure thorough drying first.
- **Poor germination next season** — seed viability varies by crop; some (like onion) decline quickly, others (like tomato) last years.
- **Accidental cross-pollination** — isolate varieties of the same species if growing more than one for seed.

05 Timing & maintenance

BEST TIME	At the natural end of each crop's cycle, once seed is fully mature.
DURATION	Seed viability varies widely — a season for some, many years for others.
MAINTENANCE	Check stored seed periodically for moisture or pest issues.
SIGNS OF SUCCESS	Seed pods rattle when dry, or seed separates easily from fruit and feels hard, not soft.

06 Tips & variations

PAIRS WELL WITH

Direct Sowing Basics

COMMON MISTAKES

Saving seed from hybrid (F1) varieties expecting true-to-type results

Storing seed before it's fully dry

PRO TIP

Start with easy, naturally self-pollinating crops like beans, peas, tomatoes, and lettuce — much lower risk of unwanted cross-pollination.