

HOW TO GROW SQUASH !

Squash is divided into two classes – summer squash and winter squash. Summer squash have softer skin, while winter squash have hard shells.

Winter Squashes

- Acorn
- Butternut
- Buttercup
- Spaghetti Squash
- Squash High Beta Gold
- Sunshine Squash
- Pumpkin

Summer Squashes

- Zucchini
- Crookneck Summer Squash
- Straightneck Summer Squash
- Squash Sungreen

When to Plant

Sow directly into the garden once the danger of frost has passed or for an earlier crop, start indoors 3-4 weeks before the last frost using 3-4" Jiffy peat pots and make sure to weather/harden off the plants before setting them in the ground.

Location/Soil

Best when planted in a rich, moist, well-drained soil in full sun. Transplants should only go into the garden once soil is completely warmed.

Planting & Growing Information

Sow seeds 2.5 cm (1") deep and sow 5-6 seeds per hill or 5 cm (2") apart. Plants should be spaced/thinned to approximately 3 plants per hill or 15 cm (6") apart. Rows should be spaced 1.5-1.8 m (5-6') apart.

Seeds germinate in approximately 5-12 days.

Days to Maturity

Summer Squash: 50-65 days from date directly sown in garden.
Winter Squash: 60-100 days from date directly sown in garden.

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Other Information

The size of your garden may determine which squash varieties to grow – squash plants require a large space. Smaller fruited varieties can be trained up a trellis which can help save space.

Keep soil adequately moist throughout the season and give plants a nice deep watering once a week. When watering, try to avoid wetting the plant's leaves as this can encourage disease.

Spaghetti Squash – After cooking, this interesting squash can be pulled out in strands similar in appearance to spaghetti. Popular with kids!

Harvesting & Storage

Summer squash tastes better when smaller in size so for best quality and flavor, they should be harvested when young and tender. Squash grow rapidly so it is a good idea to regularly (every 1 or 2 days) check for more, especially in hot weather.

Often summer squashes are harvested too late when the fruit is large and hard. Most elongated varieties are picked when they are 2-3 inches in diameter and 6 to 8 inches long.

Regular harvesting will increase the yield.

Use a sharp knife or pruning shears to harvest and wear gloves if possible as the leafstalks and stems are prickly and can scratch and irritate unprotected hands and arms

To store summer squash, harvest small squash and place, unwashed in plastic bags in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Wash the squash just before preparation. As with most vegetables, water droplets promote decay during storage. The storage life of summer squash is brief, so use within two to three days.

Winter squash can be usually be harvested when the vines have died or around the time of a light frost. The fruits will have turned a deep, solid color and the rind will be hard (not easily pierced by a fingernail). Harvest the main part of the crop before heavy frosts hit your area.

Cut squash from the vines carefully, leaving two inches of stem attached. Avoid cuts and bruises when handling. Fruits that are not fully mature, have been injured, have had their stems knocked off, or have been subjected to heavy frost do not keep and should be used as soon as possible or be composted.

Store on a shelf (not on cement floor) in a cool dry location around 10-13°C (50-55°F).

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Companion Planting

Likes: Corn, onion, radish

Eating

Summer squash can be grilled, steamed, boiled, sautéed, fried or used in stir fry recipes. They mix well with onions, tomatoes and okra in vegetable medleys. Summer squash can be used interchangeably in most recipes.

To cook winter squash, place unpeeled pieces cut sides down on a shallow baking dish and bake in a 350°F oven for 30 minutes or longer. Check for doneness by piercing with a fork or skewer. When tender, remove from the oven and allow the pieces to cool. Spoon out the soft flesh and mash with a fork or process in a blender or food processor. Small acorn squash and spaghetti squash can be pierced in several places with a long-tined fork or metal skewer and baked whole. Piercing prevents the shell from bursting during cooking. Place the squash on a baking dish and bake for 1 1/2 to 2 hours at 325°F.

Source:

McKenzie Seeds (www.mckenzieseeds.com), a longtime supporter of Plant • Grow • Share a Row

Links:

Seeds:

<https://mckenzieseeds.com/collections/squash>

Articles from Harrowsmith:

www.harrowsmithmag.com/tag/squash

www.harrowsmithmag.com/tag/butternut-squash-muffins

www.harrowsmithmag.com/tag/spaghetti-squash



As part of your garden this year, plant and grow an extra row of your favourite veggies and donate the harvest to your local food bank. Help us help all those in need.

**Special thanks to McKenzie Seeds for their great growing information
and their long-time support for Plant • Grow • Share A Row**