

Growing Seeds Indoors: Growing Seeds Indoors Project

If you can, visit a greenhouse to see how seeds are started. You can also visit a high school or college horticulture program, and see how they start seeds.

1. You need:
 - corn seed
 - sunflower seeds of a dwarf variety (such as 'Sunspot')
 - weather thermometer
 - mini-greenhouse
 - seed-starting, soilless mix
 - choice of: 6 peat-pellets, peat pots, or paper cups



2. Make a mini-greenhouse as described in "Growing Seeds Indoors: Make a Mini-Greenhouse".



3. Plant 3 of your peat pellets or pots with the corn seeds and the other 3 with sunflower seeds. Put 2 or 3 seeds in each peat pellet or pot.
4. Put your pots or pellets in the mini-greenhouse, and cover with plastic making sure not to cover the drainage holes.
5. Put your mini-greenhouse in a warm place. Write down the temperature of the place where you put your mini-greenhouse. If it is less than 65° F, try to find a warmer place so the seeds sprout faster.

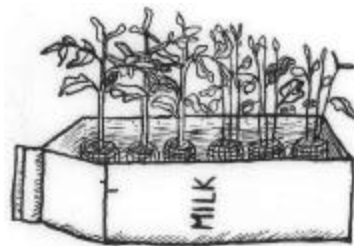
6. Check your mini-greenhouse every day to see if your seeds have come up. If the soil seems to be getting dry, water carefully, but if you keep the mini-greenhouse cover on, you shouldn't have to water much. Write down how many days it took for the seeds to come up. _____

The first leaves to come up are called the *cotyledons* or seed leaves. They develop as part of the tiny plant still inside the seed.

7. When all your seeds have sprouted, or germinated, remove the mini-greenhouse cover. Make sure you have only one plant in each pellet or pot by carefully cutting off any extra plants with scissors.

Move your plants to a sunny place, like a windowsill or very sunny room. Write down what the temperature is in the room. _____ Make sure it is over 65° F or your plants will grow very slowly. Check the soil often and add water if it starts to get dry.

8. After a few days, you will see a second set of leaves on your seedlings that may look different from the seed leaves. These are the *true leaves*. The rest of the leaves that grow on your plant will look like these true leaves.



9. Measure the seedlings every day for one week, from the soil level to the top leaf. Make a chart to show the growth of the seedlings.
10. If you are going to do the *Vegetable Gardening Project*, keep growing your seedlings until it is time to transplant them into the garden. Or transplant the sunflowers into larger containers and grow in a sunny place.