

Growing Seeds Indoors: Make your own soilless mix

Seeds grown indoors need special soil different from plants grown outside. They need clean soil that has no bugs or diseases. They also need soil with good drainage and lots of room for air.

You can make your own clean soilless mix.

Mix:	4 parts	peat moss
	1 part	perlite or vermiculite

1. Peat moss

Peat moss is the partly decayed remains of moss plants found in bogs (swampy areas). When mixed with perlite or vermiculite it is excellent for starting seeds.

Peat moss is hard to moisten. Before planting your seeds, add water until the peat is moistened thoroughly. Let it drain before planting your seeds. This is true for all soil mixes containing peat moss.

2. Perlite

A lightweight, clean, heat expanded volcanic glass that is used in container mixes and for starting seeds. Perlite lets more air get to the plant's roots and is often mixed with soil or peat moss. Its only problem is that it tends to float away during watering.

3. Vermiculite

A lightweight, clean product made from expanded volcanic rock (mica). Vermiculite holds moisture and nutrients in a soil mix. It tends to break down after a while and can become soggy, but is excellent for making soils lighter in weight.

Note: Do not use construction grade, insulation vermiculite--it often contains chemicals that can be harmful to plants.

What did you use in your soilless mix? _____
Did the ingredients feel different when wet than they did dry? _____ Explain how so. _____