

## Herb Gardening: Planting Your Outdoor Herb Garden

**Start** your herb seeds indoors as directed in the Growing Seeds Indoors Project. Most herbs are difficult to start outdoors from seeds since the seeds are often very small and dry out easily. The easiest herbs to grow from seed are parsley, chives, sage, and basil. Some hard-to-grow herbs can be started easily from cuttings or divisions, especially the mints. You may also buy plants during the spring from most nurseries and greenhouses.

Make sure you have a sunny area to plant your herb garden.

**Prepare** the ground for planting. If grass is growing where your garden will be, you will need to remove it. An adult will need to help you with this. Before planting, the ground should be loosened using a shovel or soil fork. Dig into and break up the soil so that the roots of your plants can grow easily. If you are going to plant a large herb garden your teacher or leader may want you to get a machine called a tiller to break up the soil. Look in your library for information on tillers. If the soil has a lot of clay (is heavier and sticky and forms solid clumps in your hand when you squeeze it), you may need to add compost to help your plants grow.

Find out what the last frost date is in your area (your local Extension agent or Master Gardener volunteer will know). Do not plant your garden before the last frost date - herbs do not like cold weather!

**Transplant** your herbs to their new home in your garden after the last frost date. Mark off the sections between herbs with bricks, stones, or wood. Be sure to label each section since some herbs are hard to tell apart from other herbs and weeds. Water and mulch your plants. If there is no rain, be sure to **water** your plants every few days until they are growing well. **Pull out** any weeds growing in your herb garden.

Continue to take care of your herb garden according to the directions that came with each herb. Follow the directions for harvesting that came with the herbs. You may also find information on growing herbs in library books or on the Internet. What herbs are you growing? \_\_\_\_\_

Write down the date you transplanted your herbs. \_\_\_\_\_

Which one seems to grow the fastest? \_\_\_\_\_