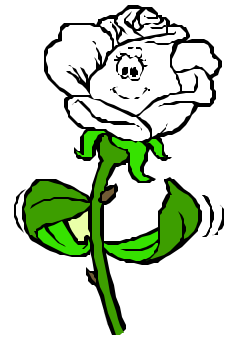
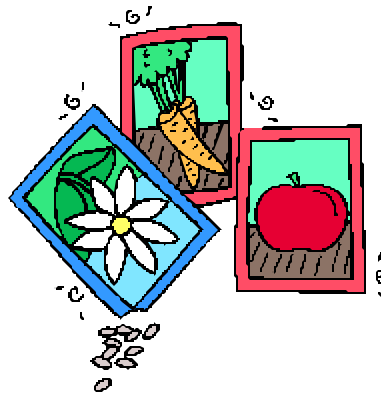


Starting Seeds



Hillermann's
Kids' Club

You will need:

- Seed-starting medium (soil)
- Seed-starting trays or flats that do not leak water, pots, inserts trays or plug trays. If you are reusing these things make sure you wash and then have an adult help you sterilize them using a bleach mixture 1-part bleach to 10 parts water. Let air dry.
- Warm water (not softened)
- Seeds for what you plan to grow and directions for the particular seed you are starting. Sometimes good directions are on the back of the seed packet.

To get started:

1. Dampen soil.
2. Once the soil mix has absorbed the water you are ready to plant. Keep in mind whether your seed needs light or darkness to germinate. Also think about seed size and how deeply the seed needs to be planted. Very fine seed often is sprinkled on top of the soil mix and often (not always) requires light to germinate. Bigger seeds are usually buried 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch under the soil. Follow the depth of planting, spacing suggestions, and the light requirements on the seed packet for each different variety of seed. If starting in pots, you may want to put 2-3 seeds in each pot to be sure to get at least one to germinate.
3. Once seeds are planted, water from the bottom. Remove seed tray inserts and set them in a pan of warm water (70-80 degrees). After they have absorbed a good amount and are quite damp, lift out the inserts and set them back in their flat. Cover your newly planted seeds with plastic until they sprout. If they require light to germinate, place the light 2-3 inches above the flats and be sure to use clear plastic. If they require darkness, use black plastic and set where it is dark.
4. Once sprouted, remove plastic. Set plants under the lights (always keeping light 2-3 inches above the plants you will have to adjust them as they grow).
5. As soil-less mix contains no food for seedlings, you will need to add a mild fertilizer solution to the water that you dip your plants into. Use at 1/2 to 1/4 the normal strength. Water when the soil mix begins to dry, but do not let it dry completely. If using Peat pots, keep some water standing in the tray so the pots don't dry out.
6. Enjoy! Remember to start perennials early as it takes them a long time to grow. Many annuals can be started 4-6 weeks before your last frost date.

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