





Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener

Growing in Oregon Tomatoes

Quick Garden Tips

Plant tomatoes outside as small plants (called "starts") when the soil temperature is at least 55 degrees F and nighttime temperatures are above 45 degrees F.

- 2 For best results, choose sturdy tomato starts that are short and dark green. Avoid starts that are leggy (tall and floppy), yellow or have started flowering.
- Plant the starts deeper than the pot they were grown in, with only a few sets of leaves showing above the soil.
- 4 Add an all-purpose fertilizer in the bottom of the planting hole at planting time and around the plant about every 3 weeks until tomatoes ripen. Follow directions on the fertilizer container.
- **5** Most tomatoes need extra support. Provide a sturdy tomato cage, stake or trellis at planting time.
- Keep the soil evenly moist until tomatoes appear, then water deeply 1 or 2 times a week.



Oregon Gardening Calendar for Tomatoes

Season and Location

Tomatoes need at least 8 hours of direct sun each day.



Growing Pattern

Often listed on the plant or seed label.

Determinant: bushy plants need less support; tomatoes ripen at about the same time. Can be grown in containers or in the ground.

Indeterminant: taller, wider plants must have support; tomatoes ripen over a longer season. Better for growing in the ground.

Container Gardening

Choose a determinate type with smaller sized tomatoes.

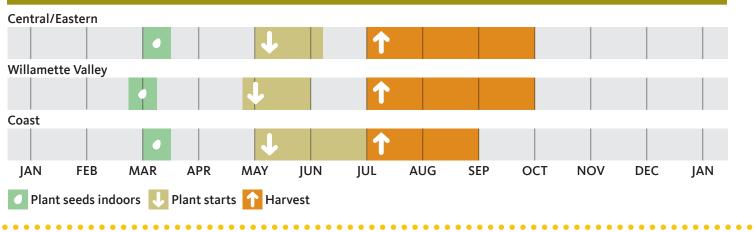
 Plant one tomato in at least a
 5-gallon container. Larger containers allow for a bigger harvest.

Requires frequent and even watering.

Key Pests and Diseases

- State to the second sec
- Aphids: hose off with water

Blossom end rot: mulch plants and keep soil moisture even. Some varieties, such as Roma, are more prone to this condition, so choose other varieties if it is a problem in your garden.



Recommended Types to Grow

There are over 4,000 tomato types in many colors, shapes and sizes!

Small fruited/cherry: Chocolate Cherry, Juliet, Sungold, SunSugar, Sweet Million

Slicer/Early: Oregon Spring

Slicer/Mid season: Carmello, Celebrity, Fantastic

Slicer/heirloom: Black Krim, Brandywine, Cosmonaut Volkov, Green Zebra

Paste: San Marzano

Container: Early Girl, Patio, Gold Nugget, Red Robin, Little Napoli



When and How to Harvest

- Harvest tomatoes before they are completely ripe. Twist tomatoes off the vine or cut the stem with clippers or scissors to avoid hurting the plant.
- Unripe tomatoes that are starting to turn color can be taken indoors to ripen. Harvest these tomatoes when outdoor temperatures go below 50 degrees F.

Storage and Cooking

Store tomatoes at room temperature away from direct sunlight. Plan to use within a few days after they ripen.

Refrigerating ripe tomatoes can help delay softening but may reduce flavor.

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Tomatoes are enjoyed raw and cooked. Add to pizza, sandwiches and salads or use in sauces, soups and salsas.

Makes: 3 cups

Baked Tomatoes with Cheese

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

2 large **tomatoes** cut into thick slices (about 1 inch)

⅓ cup shredded **cheese** (try parmesan, Swiss or cheddar)

- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon each **salt** and **pepper**

% teaspoon ${\it garlic \ powder}$ (1 clove garlic, minced)

Directions

- 1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Place tomato slices in a single layer in a shallow baking dish.
- 2. In a small bowl, combine cheese, oregano, salt, pepper and garlic powder. Sprinkle mixture over tomatoes.
- 3. Bake 5 to 10 minutes, or until cheese turns golden brown and starts to bubble. Serve warm.
- 4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



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