

Beginner Herb Starter Checklist

Essential Herbs

- Basil
- Mint (separate pot)
- Parsley
- Rosemary

Supplies

- Pots with drainage
- Potting mix
- Compost
- Perlite/sand
- Watering can

Setup

- Sunny location (6+ hrs)
- Correct pot size
- Group by watering needs
- Ensure airflow

Watering

- Check soil first
- Soft herbs = moist
- Woody herbs = dry
- Avoid overwatering

Maintenance

- Harvest regularly
- Remove flowers
- Fertilise lightly
- Replace short-lived herbs

Herb Harvesting Cheat Sheet

Full harvesting reference

Herb	When to Harvest	How to Harvest	Key Tip
Basil	Before flowering	Cut above node	Remove flowers
Mint	Regularly	Cut stems low	Control growth
Parsley	Once established	Cut outer stems	Do not cut centre
Coriander	Before bolting	Cut outer leaves	Replant often
Chives	When tall	Cut near base	Regrows quickly
Rosemary	Anytime lightly	Cut soft stems	Avoid woody parts
Thyme	Before flowering	Trim stems	Do not cut old wood
Oregano	Before flowering	Cut stems	Encourage bushiness
Sage	Before flowering	Cut leaves/stems	Avoid overharvesting

Best Herbs by Sunlight

Match herbs to your light

Sunlight Level	Herbs That Thrive	Notes
Full Sun (6–8+ hrs)	Basil, Rosemary, Thyme, Oregano, Sage	Best flavour and growth
Partial Sun (4–6 hrs)	Parsley, Coriander, Chives, Dill	Tolerates some shade
Low Light (2–4 hrs)	Mint, Lemon Balm	Survives, slower growth
Indoor / Grow Light	Basil, Mint, Parsley, Chives	Use grow lights for consistency

Herb Watering Cheat Sheet

Herb	Watering Need	When to Water	Warning Signs
Basil	High	Keep evenly moist. Water when topsoil just begins to dry.	Too dry: drooping leaves. Too wet: yellow leaves, soft stems.
Mint	Moderate–High	Keep consistently moist but not soggy.	Wilts quickly when dry. Weak growth if waterlogged.
Parsley	Moderate	Water when top 2–3 cm of soil is slightly dry.	Slow growth, bitter leaves.
Coriander	Moderate	Keep soil evenly moist, especially in warm weather.	Bolts early under stress.
Chives	Moderate	Water when surface dries, do not let fully dry out.	Thin growth, browning tips.
Chamomile	Low–Moderate	Allow slight drying between watering.	Weak growth if too wet.
Rosemary	Low	Let soil dry well between watering.	Yellowing leaves, root rot.
Thyme	Low	Water only when soil is clearly dry.	Poor flavour, rot if overwatered.
Oregano	Low	Allow soil to dry between watering.	Soft, weak growth.
Sage	Low	Water after soil dries noticeably.	Yellow leaves, decline.