



Growing Herbs in Pots



We all have down-sized our homes, and with that, our gardens to where growing kitchen herbs in containers has become the easiest and most practical way to have fresh herbs handy most of the year. It requires a bit more maintenance time and expense than our former in-ground herb gardens, but there is a great advantage in being able to move the containers around to fit the needs of the plants.

Most any container will work for planting herbs-half whiskey or wine barrels, terra-cotta pots, old copper buckets, bushel baskets, just about anything that will

hold soil and drain well. A window box is also a handy way to grow kitchen herbs. If the box has a southern exposure, you will find that the herbs keep growing well into the winter as the heat of the house will keep the soil warm until the first freeze.

The size of the container is almost more important than the type of container. If the pot is too small, the soil will dry out quickly and the herbs will soon become "root-bound." In hot weather these small containers may require watering several times a day. Wood containers hold moisture better than clay pots, but clay works well if you splash water on the outside of clay pots whenever you are watering the herbs.

Since you will be watering potted herbs more often than herbs growing in the ground, you will also need to fertilize the herbs more often. It's best to use a powdered fertilizer suitable for vegetables and herbs that mixes with water in a hose attachment, soaking the herbs with the mixture every three to four weeks. Constant snipping of the herbs for use in cooking will keep the plants from blooming and turning to seed so don't forget to reach out and snip a piece of rosemary for that sizzling pork chop on the grill, cutting a mixture of fresh herbs to sprinkle onto garden salads, rubbing the rim of your glass of iced tea with a sprig of fresh mint or lemon verbena, or nibbling on a piece of fresh parsley while you flip the burgers.