

Free
PRINTABLE
GUIDE

The
**Small-Space
Garden**
Starter Checklist

5 Beginner-Friendly Vegetables You Can
Grow in Containers, Balconies,
Patios, or Small Yards



Easy starter
vegetables



Container-friendly
tips



Quick setup
checklist



A simple starting guide for beginners
who want to grow food in a small space.



GROW
GOOD
THINGS



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Your 5 Best Beginner Vegetables

These five options are beginner-friendly, productive, and well-suited to containers, balconies, patios, or small yards.

1



Lettuce



Sunlight: 4–6 hours



Container depth: 6–8 in



Harvest: 30–45 days



Tip: Great for quick wins and repeat harvests.

2



Radishes



Sunlight: 6+ hours



Container depth: 6–8 in



Harvest: 25–35 days



Tip: Fast-growing and very beginner-friendly.

3



Green Onions



Sunlight: 4–6 hours



Container depth: 6–8 in



Harvest: 20–30 days for greens



Tip: Easy to regrow and perfect for small spaces.

4



Cherry Tomatoes



Sunlight: 6–8 hours



Container depth: 12+ in



Harvest: 60–80 days



Tip: Choose a compact or patio variety.

5



Basil



Sunlight: 6+ hours



Container depth: 6–8 in



Harvest: 30–45 days



Tip: Productive, fragrant, and ideal beside tomatoes.

Quick Start Supplies



Containers with drainage



Good-quality potting mix



Seeds or starter plants



Watering can or bottle



Sunny spot



Plant labels



Small-Space Garden Starter Checklist

Use this page to set up your first simple container garden with confidence.

1 Choose Your Space

- I picked a balcony, patio, windowsill, or small yard area.
- My chosen space gets at least 4–6 hours of light.
- I checked for easy watering access.
- I made sure excess water can drain safely.



2 Prepare Your Setup

- I have containers with drainage holes.
- I bought potting mix, not heavy garden soil.
- I chose 1–3 beginner vegetables to start with.
- I have a watering can or spray bottle ready.



3 Plant and Care

- I planted seeds or starters at the correct depth.
- I watered gently after planting.
- I labeled each container.
- I plan to check moisture daily.
- I will rotate containers if one side gets less sun.



4 Your 7-Day Mini Plan












- | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| Day 1 | Choose containers and soil |
| Day 2 | Pick vegetables and plant |
| Day 3 | Check sunlight and watering |
| Day 4 | Label and organize containers |
| Day 5 | Inspect growth and moisture |
| Day 6 | Adjust position if needed |
| Day 7 | Review what is working |



My First Garden Notes

Which Vegetable Should You Start With?

Use this quick decision guide to choose the easiest first plant for your space, sunlight, and goals.

Vegetable	Best for	Best if you have	Difficulty	Quick note
 Lettuce	Quick wins and repeat harvests.	 4–6 hours sun and shallow containers.	 Easy	 Great first pick if you want to harvest leaves again and again.
 Radishes	Fastest results.	 6+ hours sun and want short harvest time.	 Very Easy	 Excellent if you want to see progress quickly.
 Green Onions	Kitchen usefulness and easy regrowth.	 Small space and moderate sun.	 Very Easy	 Perfect for beginners who cook often.
 Cherry Tomatoes	High reward and patio containers.	 Deeper pots and 6–8 hours sun.	 Moderate	 Choose a compact or patio variety for easier success.
 Basil	Flavor and companion planting.	 6+ hours sun and want an herb for cooking.	 Easy	 A fragrant, productive beginner herb that pairs well with tomatoes.

Quick Pick by Goal



Fastest harvest



Radishes



Most beginner-friendly



Green Onions



Best for small balconies



Lettuce



Best for cooking



Basil



Best for bigger payoff




























Cherry Tomatoes




Container & Watering Cheat Sheet

Use this page to choose the right container depth and water with more confidence.

 Vegetable	 Recommended Container Depth	 Sunlight (Per Day)	 Watering Reminder	 Beginner Tip
 Lettuce	6–8 in	 4–6 hrs	 Keep soil lightly moist.	 Harvest outer leaves first.
 Radishes	6–8 in	 6+ hrs	 Water consistently to avoid splitting.	 Thin seedlings so roots can develop.
 Green Onions	6–8 in	 4–6 hrs	 Water when top inch feels dry.	 You can cut greens and let them regrow.
 Cherry Tomatoes	12+ in	 6–8 hrs	 Water deeply and regularly.	 Use a stake or cage for support.
 Basil	6–8 in	 6+ hrs	 Water when top inch is dry.	 Pinch leaves often to encourage bushy growth.

The 1-Inch Finger Test



 Check more often in hot or windy weather.

Quick Buying Guide

-  Containers with drainage holes
-  Good-quality potting mix
-  Watering can or bottle
-  Plant labels
-  Sunny spot

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Beginner Mistakes to Avoid

Avoid these common mistakes to make your first small-space garden easier and more successful.

1

Starting with too many plants



Fix:
Start with just 1–3 containers.

2

Using containers without drainage



Fix:
Always choose pots with drainage holes.

3

Using heavy garden soil in pots



Fix:
Use good-quality potting mix instead.

4

Overwatering on a fixed schedule



Fix:
Check the soil first before watering.

5

Choosing plants that need more space than you have



Fix: Pick compact, container-friendly vegetables.

6

Placing plants in a dark spot



Fix:
Choose the sunniest space you have.

7

Forgetting to label containers



Fix:
Label what you planted and the date.

8

Expecting perfect results too fast



Fix:
Give your garden a little time and observe what works.

Your First Success Plan

1



Pick one sunny space

2



Choose 1–3 starter plants

3



Use the right container and potting mix

4



Check moisture and sunlight each day

Small progress counts — even one healthy container is a great start.