

# Start Seed in the Winter...Outdoors!



One way to grow a plentiful crop of perennials, or any plant that doesn't mind a little cold like kale, swiss chard, and all cole crops, is to start growing results. This same technique can be used to germinate annuals that don't mind cold weather like pansies and violas.

## Materials

- Seeds
- Containers such as gallon milk or juice jugs, large pop bottles, clean and sterilized reusable food containers of all sorts including clear deli boxes
- Tools to make small holes in tops and bottoms of your containers
- Packaging tape
- Potting soil or seed starter
- Water
- A secure outdoor area where containers won't blow over or be disturbed by animals, etc.
- Labeling materials—ex: sticky labels, tape, sharpie marker

## Procedure

- Start any seed at any point in the winter. The seed will germinate when the weather warms.
- Ensure your container has room for 3-4" of soil and at least 2" of head space for the emerging plants.
- Punch ventilation holes in the top and sides of containers and drainage holes in the bottoms.
- Label the containers.
- If you use milk jugs, cut them in half leaving the jug attached, like a hinge, below the handle.
- Fill containers with 3-4" of soil.
- Moisten the soil and plant seeds at proper depth according to the seed packet.
- Secure the lids on the containers/tape the opening around the jug. Alternatively, punch holes at the opening you've cut in the jug and use string or a stick through the holes to close the opening.
- Place the containers in a secure place outdoors. From time to time check the containers for Moisture once weather starts warming. If they get completely dry, moisten the soil. As the weather warms prop the lids open or remove them to keep the seedlings cool after they germinate. Close the lids to protect the plants during cold nights.



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