

# A KITCHEN GARDEN!



Using everyday kitchen ingredients, you can grow your very own herbs, vegetables and fruits, and take them right back to the kitchen to cook and eat.

## This is all you need

### • Containers

Look for old/unused containers around the house – plastic containers, old mugs, buckets, paint buckets and old dustbins. You'll need to fill them with soil and compost. Then place them in your balcony, by a window or in your garden where sunlight will reach them. Make holes in the bottom of the containers for water to drain out.



### • Soil

Ask the person who tends to the garden in your house or apartment building where you can find the best soil to grow your plants in. You can also get soil and compost from nurseries. Mix five parts of soil with one part compost and fill more than half of each container with this mixture.



### • Seeds, Cuttings and Pods



Walk into your kitchen and start looking for seeds -- they come in all colours and shapes. Look for unbroken seeds, with their skins on. Let's start with just a few kinds – mustard and fenugreek. You can also have plants growing from other plant parts. Garlic can be grown from its pods and mint from cuttings, even entire mint plants that grow and spread quite easily.

### • Pudina/Mint

With your index finger, dig an inch or two into the soil. Plant the mint root in this hole. Pat down the soil around the pudina so it stands firm. Do this with a few more pudina plants. Leave a gap of two inches between them.

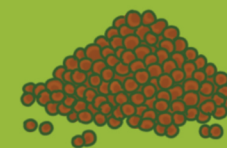


### • Fenugreek/ Vendhayam/ Methi

With your index finger make a one-inch-deep hole in the soil, and drop in a seed. Keep making more small holes, an inch or two apart, and dropping in seeds until you fill the whole pot. Cover the seeds with soil and pat the soil down.



### • Mustard



Plant the seeds about six inches apart as once they sprout and start growing they will require more space.

### • Garlic

Break the garlic heads apart, being careful to keep the papery wrapper around each clove intact. Only plant the biggest cloves. Garlic has fairly shallow roots, but it is important to make sure they have plenty of room to stretch out in the soil. Plant one pod in an upright position not more than 1½ inches below the soil. Plant the pods around 6 inches apart.



*Don't forget to make sure the soil is always moist. Do not pour water into the containers, but sprinkle them with water every day.*

## How long do seeds stay alive?

The seeds in your kitchen are alive and breathing. If stored in dry and very cold conditions, seeds can stay alive for several hundred years. In fact, a few years ago, seeds probably buried by an ice age squirrel in Siberia were grown into plants, after 32,000 years!



## Write to us!



Send us photographs of your kitchen garden! Did you run into any problems? How long did it take for your plants to grow? Send us your observations at [edu@ncf-india.org](mailto:edu@ncf-india.org)!