

A botanical illustration featuring several different types of plants. On the left, there is a tall, thin stem with a cluster of small, dark, round seeds at the top. In the center, there are several stems with various leaf shapes, including some with serrated edges and others with more rounded, pointed leaves. On the right, there is a stem with a large, feathery leaf. The background is a light, pale green color.

Culinary Herbs: Come to where the flavor is

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What is an Herb



Any plant with leaves, seeds, or flowers used for flavoring food medicine, or perfume.



A plant or plant part valued for its medicinal, savory, or aromatic qualities. Merriam -Webster



The United States Arboretum states that, “Herbs, in the culinary sense, are leaves of plants that can be used either fresh or dried to season food.”





Herb vs Spice

Spices are flavorings, often of tropical origin, that are dried. Some spices may come from the bark of trees (e.g., cinnamon) or from the underground rhizome of a plant (e.g., ginger). A plant that produces a spice can also be an herb. (for example, cilantro, an herb, is the leafy portion and coriander is the seed of the same plant, *Coriandrum sativum*).

Based on these definitions, a plant such as fennel, *Foeniculum officinale*, may be viewed as a vegetable for its bulb-like leaves, as an herb for its fronds, as a spice for its seeds, or as an ornamental, for its lacy foliage and graceful movement in a breezy landscape.

Herb Uses

Disclaimer: The following is intended exclusively for educational purposes and should not be construed as legal advice. Every effort at accuracy has been made but AHG cannot guarantee that the information provided here is fully correct or up-to-date. Laws, regulations, and their interpretation can change rapidly and can also vary from place to place; individuals are advised to seek professional legal advice regarding their specific needs and situation. Note: these FAQs are applicable to the United States only; regulations and laws vary greatly around the world related to herbal practice and products.



Pollinators

Many herbs produce flowers that are completely irresistible to pollinating insects including native bee species, honey bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Try complementing your vegetable garden with some pollinator-seducing herbs.

Basil, Lemon balm, Lavender, Anise hyssop, Borage, Sage, Savory, Chamomile, Rosemary, Dill, Thyme



Landscape & Beautification

Herbs in the landscape is a way to add color, texture and aroma.

Examples: Rosemary, and Lavender are perennial shrubs that require little maintenance once established. English thyme makes a great groundcover in the garden.



Aromatherapy & Medicinal

Herbalism, makes use of a large variety of plant material, such as boiling the root for tincture tea, grinding the leaves for a poultice. Essential oils are highly concentrated natural plant extracts. I.e. Mint/Lavender/ Myrrh/



Crafts

Wreaths, Tussie Mussies, pomander balls for visual beauty.

Herbal sachets, bath bags,, dream pillows contain blended oils, and other natural extracts, with ordinary herbs to create extraordinary fragrances to restore mind and body.



Lore

Medieval lore and beliefs from spells, to witchery, to folk lore.

Smudges: The popular belief is that by burning specific fragrant herbs, they may be able to ward off spirits, or purify their surroundings.

Sage the house for purification, wearing rosemary to improve memory, Oregano for joy.



Culinary Herbs: Take your meals from ordinary to **EXTRAORDINARY**



Growing Culinary Herbs

Some of the most forgiving plants to grow.

HERB GARDEN General Tips

- **Size:** Start small
Great container plantings
- **Location:** Near Kitchen and Full Sun
- **Soil:** Not fussy, decent soil and drainage.
 - Many herbs either spread or re-seed
- **Harvest** before they flower; pinch for bushiness
- **Flavor:** Smallest and earliest leaves are usually more flavorful

Annual Herb

Herbs with a life cycle that lasts only one year. They grow from seed, bloom, produce seeds, and die in one growing season. They then need to be replanted each spring

Basil

Dill

Cilantro

Parsley (biennial grown as annual)

Know what you are planting – some herbs are amazing travelers!

Perennial Herbs

Perennial herbs return year after year. Perennials have structures, such as bulbs or rhizomes, that allow them to survive the winter.

Sage

Oregano

Thyme: |

Rosemary (Tender Perennial)

Chives: Regular/Garlic



Basil, ***Osmium basilicum***

*"With basil then I will begin
Whose scent is wondrous pleasing."-Michael
Drayton,1612*

My first love in the herb world

Charming anise or licorice scent of the leaves and a sweet, peppery taste.

Culinary Tips:

It is so versatile, and can be used in cooked, baked or fresh dishes, taking on a different personality in each.

Basil is the quintessential Mediterranean herb, an Italian cuisine staple. Pesto, marinara, spaghetti, lasagna, poultry, soups, stews.

Sweet basil, Genovese; Thai basil, lemon basil, and holy basil.

Folklore:

Basil is a sign of love in Italy...That if a woman places a pot of basil on her windowsill, she is ready to receive a suitor. And, if a man receives a sprig of basil from a maiden, he will fall hopelessly in love with her forever.

Must be cussed at to properly germinate.

Plant near tomatoes to improve their flavor.





Italian is more flavorful than its curly cousin



Parsley - Boring? Never!

Light scent and fresh taste, parsley can be used in anything from soups to sauces to vegetables. Member of the carrot family.

Culinary Tips:

Available dried or fresh. Misunderstood and under-used in fresh and more flavorful form. Bright, grassy flavor of parsley allows it to go places other herbs just can't. Over-rated in the dried form.

A real workhorse in the kitchen. Parsley is equally at home in the background of your dish or playing center stage.

Note: In my everyday cooking, I can't think of many dishes that wouldn't benefit from a bit of parsley.

Try: Chimichurri sauce or a Mediterranean dish like tabbouleh.

One of the oldest and longest used herbs known. Notoriously difficult to grow, as germination can take up to two weeks.

Folklore:

Known as the herb of the underworld.

Only grow well in a witch's garden.

One should never cut parsley if you are in love, or you will sever your relationship.

Known as a cleansing herb. Parsley was placed on plates, to protect the food from contamination.

The Romans and Greeks used parsley for refreshing their breath after indulging in garlic, wine, and ale. (eating it would delay drunkenness). Also worn at banquets as it was thought to absorb wine vapors.

Parsley, *Petroselinum crispum*

"Parsley - the jewel of herbs, both in the pot and on the plate." ~Albert Stockli

When you suspect this green thing
you're bout to eat to be coriander but
turns out it's parsley



https://www.boredpanda.com/i-hate-coriander-memes/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=organic



Cilantro, *Coriandrum sativum*

"I like Cilantro, but you don't have to."

-Todd Barry

You either love it or hate it

It is actually the leaves (and stems) of the Coriander plant.

An annual herb that closely resembles and is in the same plant family (Apiaceae) as parsley. Often visually confused with flat-leaf parsley.

Culinary Tips:

Distinctive, pungent flavor vs pleasant herbaceous and citrus notes. Best in fresh dishes.

Pairs with tomatoes to seafood. Think Pico de gallo/fish taco. Tastes best when used fresh and added near the end of the cooking time. It loses flavor when dried or exposed to heat.

A staple in many cuisines (Mexican, Caribbean and Asian) While the leaves are used as an herb, the dried seeds, called coriander seed, are used as a spice and have a very different taste.

Bolts quickly, so harvest when 4 - 6 inches tall, which can take 40 to 60 days after seeding. Takes up to 120 days to produce mature seed (coriander).

Has its own Facebook group dedicated to cilantro haters

Folklore:

Name is said to be derived from koris, Greek for "bedbug," because the plant smells strongly of this insect

Chinese used the herb in love potions believing it provided immortality. Aka Chinese Parsley

Coriander was thought to have aphrodisiac qualities.

Also known to be used as an "appetite" stimulant.



My favorite volunteer in the garden

In the celery family Apiaceae. Leaves and seeds are used as a herb or spice for flavoring food. From the Norse word meaning "to Lull". Dill seed was used to induce sleep.



Culinary Tips:

Fresh, delicate, grassy taste described as a combination of fennel, anise, and celery.

Dill is often used in fish and egg dishes, but the feathery green can also be added to salads or soups, or used as a garnish.

Seed: Commonly associated with the intense flavor of dill pickles that combines salt, vinegar, with the dill.

Folklore:

Used in magical spells to stave off storms.

Early colonists called dill "meetin' seed," It was chewed for refreshment during long church meetings.

Dill,
Anethum graveolens

“Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them”
A. A. Milne



The King of Herbs

Tarragon is a species of perennial herb in the sunflower family. Tarragon means "little dragon"(likely because of her serpentine root system.)

Culinary Tips:

Two main types, Russian and French: I prefer the sweet, delicate, more balanced flavor of French tarragon. Russian can be harsh.

Widely used in classic French cooking, particularly as part of the "fine herbes" blend, (**parsley, chives, tarragon. Used for seasoning** delicate dishes, such as chicken, fish, and eggs, that need a relatively short cooking period) and in béarnaise sauce. Her specific flavor difficult to substitute. The anise flavor goes well in tomato dishes.

Tender leaves can be mixed in with other greens for salads or sprinkled over a finished dish much like parsley.

Folklore: The Vanishing Herb

According to herbal lore, tarragon was burned as incense and known as the vanishing herb. (You write down the very thing you want to banish on a piece of paper, then burn it with the herb tarragon).

Tarragon, *Artemisia dracunculus*

Tomatoes and oregano make it Italian; wine and tarragon make it French. Sour cream makes it Russian; lemon and cinnamon make it Greek. Soy sauce makes it Chinese; garlic makes it good. ~Alice May Brock



Rosemary Rules

A small evergreen shrub with fragrant, evergreen, needle-like leaves. In Mediterranean region was known as *the* "dew of the sea". Tender Perennial.

Grow in pots, to allow for an easy transition indoors for winter.

Culinary Tips:

- Chopping and mincing the rosemary brings out the most flavor. Crush leaves by hand before using releases most of the fragrant compounds.
- If you are a new-by to rosemary, start slow. Add sprigs of fresh rosemary to recipes as you are cooking, then remove the sprigs before serving. The food will still absorb that rosemary zest.

A little can go a long way. Experiment, but remember that too much rosemary could overpower other tastes and smells.

- There are more than a few dishes rosemary can take from boring to brilliant. Her assertive flavor blends well with garlic to season lamb, pork, chicken, game and marinades. Also livens up seafood dishes, tomato sauces, and vegetables. Mix together Rosemary and olive oil to dress red potatoes before roasting in the oven.

Folklore:

Believed to strengthen memory (stands for remembrance and fidelity). Placed in bridal bouquets and worn at funerals.

Massaged into temples or worn during exams to stimulate memory.

Placed under pillows to ward off nightmares; skin tonics.



Rosemary,
Rosmarinus officinalis

Where Rosemary flourished, the woman ruled."
- Unknown



Sage Advice

An evergreen shrub with dusty gray-green leaves and woody stems. Sage is prized as a seasoning for its strong aroma and earthy flavor. *Salvia* means to heal, or to soothe

Culinary Tips:

Pairs well with any meat, especially poultry. Known for the distinct taste it gives to a stuffing. Base for the classic poultry seasoning. A flavor powerhouse in bean dishes, tomato sauces, omelets, polenta, chicken risotto, and compound butter.

Sage is often paired with other herbs such as thyme, marjoram, and rosemary and harmonizes well with garlic, onion, oregano, parsley, and bay leaf. A little goes a long way.

Folklore:

A staple herb for its purifying and medicinal properties.

English lore states that it's possible to attain immortality, if Sage is eaten every single day in the month of May!

If Sage grows well in the garden, the wife rules, and the business of the household is thriving.

Because of its strong fragrance, in 17th century England, herb "strewers" were employed by the Royal Family to scatter sage and lavender to cover the not so pleasant smells associated with medieval urban life.

Sage, *Salvia Officinalis*

"We are happier in many ways when we are old than when we are young. The young sow wild oats. The old grow sage."
~Winston Churchill





Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*

The only acceptable herb to grow around a sundial. - BB

Herb Seasoning 101: When in Doubt, Use Thyme

Thyme is an herb whose small leaves grow on clusters of thin stems. Common thyme and lemon thyme are most often used in cooking.

Culinary Tips:

A culinary staple for seasoning our foods. One of the finest herbs in French cuisine. As a general rule when using herbs in cooking ---you can't go wrong with thyme. It has a sweet, mild, penetrating grassy/woody/floral flavor, and is wonderfully aromatic but not overly-competitive in the kitchen.

Typically used in savory dishes like braised or roasted meat, vegetables, or fish, as well as in savory baking. Also used to add flavor and depth to marinades, soups and stocks,

Thyme often used in a blend or bouquet garni alongside other common herbs like rosemary, sage, and marjoram.

Folklore:

Ancient Greeks believed thyme gave courage



Ladies would give a symbolic sprig of thyme, as "favors" to the bravest knights.

Used to fumigate the home, also burned as incense during burial ceremonies to not only eliminate foul odors, but to ward off evil spirits.





Oregano, *Origanum vulgare*

Oregano is the spice of life.

—[Henry J. Tillman](#)

If Italy had a flavor, it would taste like oregano

Oregano is a flowering plant in the mint family. It is native to temperate Mediterranean region. A perennial herb

Culinary Tips:

Woody flavor with a bold, sweet spiciness.

THE Pizza herb. Dried is best, fresh is more pungent
Oregano is best when used in the last 15 minutes of cooking,
Makes a great accompaniment to a pot of beans, a lemony
marinade, or a simple marinara.

Oregano is considered a staple herb in many cuisines around the world.

Forms: Greek tends to be the most savory and earthy, Italian is milder and Turkish is more pungent

Folklore:

Promotes good fortune and good health.

Used in magic spells since ancient times to bring happiness, luck and protection.

The ancient Greeks believed that **oregano** was an antidote to poisons and could treat convulsions and skin irritations.



Culinary Herb Harvest Tips: HOW

Every herb is harvested in its own unique way. Here's how to harvest some of our favorites:



Thyme/Sage

Woody stemmed herbs are best harvested right before it blooms.

For the best flavor, harvest in the morning after the dew has dried.

Harvest lightly the first year

Thyme and sage can have soft or woody stems. Soft stems are best cut up and thrown into your recipe with the leaves. You can tie the wooden stems together and toss the whole bunch into your recipe – this is a great option if you're cooking a roast or soup.



Parsley/Cilantro

Wait until the stems have 3 segments.

Harvest continuously to prevent bolting (cilantro) Reseed every 3 weeks for continuous supply.

Parsley: Snip your harvest from the base of the plant to encourage more growth. Cut leaves from the outer portions first so the can focus on growing new leaves from the center of the plant.



Basil/Rosemary

Pinch each stem just above the second set of leaves.

Basil: Cut the tips of each branch weekly, or cut the entire plant to just above the second set of leaves monthly.

Pinch off any buds or flower spikes right away.

Chives

Gather leaves into a bunch and use sharp, clean scissors to cut them. Don't clip too close to the bulb or they won't regrow – leave at least ½ inch attached to the bulb above the soil. Cut from the outside of the bunch first.

Chives produce edible flowers that have a milder oniony flavor. Makes a great garnish and excellent infused vinegar.

Culinary Herbs: Take your meals from ordinary to EXTRAORDINARY

Fresh vs Dried Herb



Fresh

Fresh: Added at end of cooking process

Flavor is lighter/cleaner



Dried

More concentrated flavor

Add dried herbs early in cooking process.

Flavor is slow to release, can be more robust and lasts longer in the dish



Fresh vs Dried

Fresh vs Dried
Rule of Thumb: 3:1

When cooking with fresh herbs, use three times the amount when the recipe calls for dried herbs

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Dried Herbs

Basics of Drying Herbs

*Tie stems in bundles and hang the herbs upside down. I use twist-ties so you can easily tighten the bundles since the stems shrink as they dry. A warm, dry, well ventilated spot is best.

*Herbs can also be dried on a rack or screen. An old window screen can be used if clean and in decent shape. Position such a screen to allow the air to move freely both sides of the screen. If using a screen, you'll need to turn the herbs every few days.

*Herbs should dry away from direct sunlight and moisture or they will mold. Drying times will take anywhere from one to two weeks, depending on the types of herbs you're drying. Once dried, strip the dried leaves from the stems.

*Store in decorative jars or zip-closed bags to keep fresh.

Other methods: Oven dried, microwave, dehydrator, solar, other expensive equipment.



Possible Health Benefits of Herbs:

Enhance the flavor of virtually any dish.

Using herbs can help one to:

Use less salt Use Less Fat
Increases flavor & satisfaction

Tinctures of Health:

New studies support that herbs (and spices) can promote health as follows:

- High in antioxidant/polyphenols: compounds that help fight damage from free radical build-up which is linked to chronic disease like cancer and heart disease)
- Rich in phytochemicals, flavinoids with anti-cancer properties
- Rich in other micronutrients: vitamins and minerals
- The very thought that herbs and spices may be protective is exciting.
- More studies are needed to determine which spices and herbs, and what amounts are most beneficial.

Parsley: 1 cup of provides over 1000% of our daily value of vitamin K, plus it's rich in myricetin, a flavonoid.

Tarragon: Rich in magnesium, iron and zinc.

Basil: Rich in plant polyphenols thought to prevent chronic diseases digestion issues, weight management difficulties, diabetes, CVD's

Rosemary: good source of iron, calcium and vitamin B6, may deter the formation of carcinogenic compounds during grilling (marinades/skewers)

Sage: Contains flavonoid and polyphenol compounds, (antioxidants).

Dill: Good source of calcium and iron.

Oregano: Good source of Vitamin K, antibacterial, and anti-inflammatory properties

MARINADES/Rubs/pesto's are concentrated sources of herbs and Boost nutritional value in foods





Review Handouts:

Culinary Herb Chart

Selecting, Storing and Using Fresh Herbs by Barbara H. Drake HYG-5520

Recipes: Boursin, Compound Butter, Herb Vinegar, Herbal Vinaigrette

Sample: Boursin, Compound Butter, Herb Vinegar, Herbal Vinaigrette

Questions?





Thank You

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Master Garden Volunteer Presentation