

Terrific Tomato Tips



One of the most popular veggies grown in home gardens, tomatoes are relatively easy to grow, provided you follow our terrific tomato tips below.

Seeding/Purchasing Plants

Tomatoes can be seeded indoors 8-10 weeks prior to planting out. Plant 1-2 seeds each into small (3-4") peat pots. Planting directly into peat pots will eliminate any transplant shock in spring. Place pots into a seed tray with a humidity dome over top and check for moisture daily. Once they have germinated provide seedlings with bright light; a full spectrum light source such as a Jump Start Light Stand is economical and very easy to set up.

If choosing to purchase plants, look for tomato plants with thick, sturdy stems and dark green (not pale) foliage.

Planting

Choose a full sun location. Soil should be rich and well drained; incorporate organic material such as Sea Soil or compost before planting. Dig your hole and place bone meal or Off the Vine granular fertilizer into the planting hole. Place plants in hole.

When planting, bury plants deeper than they come in the pot, up past the first one to two sets of leaves (remove leaves). Tomatoes are able to develop roots all along their stems, so planting deeper encourages strong root growth. Water transplants in with a solution of Plant Prod Root Booster 5-15-5.

Watering

Tomatoes more than any other vegetable require consistent moisture, especially while fruit is developing. Check daily for moisture and water plants deeply when watering. Irregular watering (missing on a hot day and trying to make up for it), leads to blossom end rot of fruit (base of tomatoes turn black and mushy).

Fertilizing

Tomatoes are very heavy feeders so require consistent nutrients. The bone meal or Off the Vine used at planting should be replenished midway through the season (mid-July). These granular fertilizers will provide a slow release of nutrients over the season, but additional fertilizing with a water soluble fertilizer will be required 1-2 times per week. Use a high phosphorous fertilizer such as 15-30-15, or for an organic option choose liquid kelp.



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Pinch & Prune

Pinch and remove suckers that develop in the crotch joint of two branches. These stems will not bear fruit, but will take energy away from the rest of the plant.

When plants start to set fruit, remove leaves from the lower 12" of the plant. These lower leaves are not important to photosynthesis and removal of these leaves makes it easier to see the base of the plant when watering.



Types of Tomatoes

The type of tomato you choose will be largely based on the amount of room you have in your garden/containers.

Determinate: (don't prune). These are bushy, fairly short and grow to a certain point and then stop. These types of tomatoes set all their fruit at once (good for canning). They require more space in a garden and grow well in a tower/cage.

Indeterminate: These are tall tomatoes and require sturdy staking. They keep growing and require regular pruning for higher yields and larger fruit.

Semi Determinate: This is a third type of tomato that grows well in cages or can be staked. They grow upright like indeterminate types but are much bushier. They have thick sturdy stems and crinkled dark green foliage.

Top Tomatoes

There are endless varieties of tomatoes available, here is just a sampling of our favourites:



Cherry/Grape Tomatoes

Sun Sugar
Sweet 100
Sweet Million
Tumbler

Determinate Tomatoes

Bush Beefsteak
Early Girl
Manitoba
Mortgage Lifter



Paste Tomatoes

Health Kick
La Roma
San Marzano

Indeterminate

Big Beef
Beefmaster
Brandywine
Super Fantastic



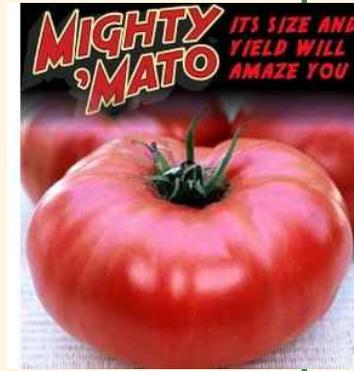
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Mighty Matos

Mighty Matos are a new selection of grafted vegetables. They are produced by grafting a cutting from one great tasting tomato to the vigorous root system of a separate tomato. The result is improved disease resistance, production and tolerance to environmental stresses or poor soils. Mighty Matos require slightly different maintenance than most tomatoes:



- Grown best in gardens/raised beds (container must be min. 18”).
- Plant at the same level the tomato is growing in the pot to keep the graft well above soil level so any roots that may form on the upper portion of the plant do not come into contact with the soil (you want the only bottom portion of the graft to root).
- Plants must be staked/caged.
- Plants will require pruning to ensure that the plant’s energy goes to fruit production and not excessive foliage.
- Plants should be fed regularly to support vigorous growth. Plants will require a couple applications of bone meal or Off the Vine granular fertilizer per season, as well as applications of liquid fertilizer (water soluble 15-30-15 or kelp) twice per week.



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