



How to Plant Sunflowers



For the best results plant sunflowers in full sun!

Design Suggestions

Be careful when growing the taller varieties because they can easily shade other plants. Tall sunflowers work best as a screen or in the back of a border. Shorter dwarf varieties can more be easily worked into a garden border. If you are growing sunflowers for cutting, choose a multi-branched variety to get the most blooms. Whichever variety you choose, plant in clusters of at least 9 plants, for the best impact.

Sunflower Growing Tips

Sunflowers are usually grown from seed. Seed can be direct seeded in the garden, once all danger of frost is past, or they can be started indoors 3-4 weeks before transplanting. Peat or paper pots are recommended for seedlings started indoors. Sunflowers don't like to have their roots disturbed. Transplants often grow faster and flower sooner than direct seeded plants, so you could lengthen your bloom period by doing both.

Sunflowers like a well-drained soil with a good amount of organic matter. They are extremely fast growers and appreciate a fertilizer high in phosphorous and potassium, (the middle and end numbers on the fertilizer package), to remind them they're supposed to set flowers on those tall stalks.

Maintenance

Watering regularly will help them set flowers. They will stop blooming during periods of drought.

Sunflowers do not like to compete with weeds. Mulching will help with both soil moisture and weed suppression. And don't forget that sunflowers need a lot of sun.

Most sunflowers get top heavy when they bloom and can use the support of staking. Planting sunflowers along a fence is the easiest way to stake them. Bamboo stakes are also strong enough to keep the upright. Use care when inserting the stakes, so you don't damage the sunflower roots.

Pests & Problems

Birds & Squirrels - Use frightening devices or cover the heads with netting and if you're worried about squirrels or other animals getting the seeds before you, try growing them in the vegetable garden. Flowers in the vegetable garden are great for attracting more pollinators. To further foil squirrels, plant a coarse leaved vegetable, like squash, at their base.

Thank you to our friends at the Spruce. com for this great information about growing sunflowers

And Special thanks to the Paul & Helen Ellis Charitable Trust for their generous support of the BRRAlliance 1000 Sunflower Project!

