

Harvesting, Using, & Storing Homegrown Herbs

Frequent harvesting of your herbs will encourage steady growth, and keep your indoor herb garden looking beautiful year-round!

Herb type	Tender annuals, including basil, cilantro, summer savory	Woody perennials, such as rosemary, sage and winter savory and Other perennials, including sage and thyme.	Parsley and other grassy herbs
Harvesting	Pinch back at base of stem.	Cut off at the point at which new branches grow off a central stem; harvesting a central stem slows down new growth. Perennials that have flowered should not be harvested back to their branching growth. Instead, harvest fresh young leaves directly below the flowery tops.	Wait to harvest until roots have developed and the plant is strong enough for regrowth. You can use a scissors or a knife to cut the herbs, or you may twist and pull off with your hands.
Storage	Short term: Herb Bouquet Long Term: Freeze	Short term: Refrigerator. Long term: Dry or freeze.	Short term: Herb Bouquet Long term: Dry

To clean fresh herbs, submerge them in a sink or bowl filled with cool salted water (about 2 tbsp salt per sinkful). The salt will drive away insects without damaging the flavor of the herbs. Remove the herbs from the saltwater, and dry in a salad spinner. Make sure they are dried completely prior to storage by blotting with paper towels.

Short term Storage Techniques	Herb Bouquet: Place cut herbs into a container of water set at room temperature, up to 2 days.	Refrigerator: Stack in loose layers separated by parchment paper or towels to allow air flow in a tightly sealed plastic container or ziploc bag.
Long Term Storage Techniques	Dry: Bundle 4-6 branches and tie by their stems. Place upside down in a cool, dry place for 3 weeks. Once dry, store in an airtight jar in a cool, dry place.	Freeze: Layer herbs in a tightly sealed plastic container or ziploc bag, can be frozen for up to 4 months. You can also freeze into ice cube trays with water, great for soups!

Moisture dense herbs, like Basil, Chives, Mint, and Tarragon preserve better by freezing. Herbs that don't have a high moisture content, such as Bay, Dill, Marjoram, Oregano, Rosemary, Summer Savory and Thyme should be dried.