SQUARE FOOT PLANTING: generally 1 plant per square foot

HARVEST

Depending on which part of an herb you intend to eat, the timing for harvest differs. If you are growing a variety because you’re after its leaves, you’ll want to harvest when the oils are at their peak, as they’re responsible for the herb’s flavor and aroma. Basil, parsley, thyme, oregano, sage—all these herbs are best harvested before flowering. Take your pick early in the morning, after dew has dried, but harvest no more than 75% of this season’s growth if you want the plant to survive.

If you’re growing an herb for its flowers (e.g., chamomile or borage), then allow buds to form, but pick just before opening for the best flavor.

And finally, if you’re after the seeds of your cilantro or any other herb, you’ll want to wait for the seed pods to dry and turn grey, carefully harvesting before the pods open completely.

STORAGE

One of the easiest preservation methods for herbs is freezing. Rinse harvested leaves with water, shaking off excess. Rough chop the leaves and press into water-filled ice cube trays. Freeze and later transfer to frozen herb cubes to sealable containers.

Try also freezing a single layer of clean herbs on a baking sheet, transferring to a sealable container once frozen.

For drying instructions, check your Growing Guide!