

**Latin Name/Genus:** *Salvia officinalis*, *Salvia apiana*  
Family: *Lamiaceae*

**Difficulty:** Easy (but slow to grow)

**Season:** Warm season

**Exposure:** Full-sun

**Zone:** Hardy to Zone 4 and Zone 7, respectively



**Timing:** Start indoors anytime between mid-winter to mid-spring; transplant, or direct sow starting late spring - starting indoors may be more reliable, particularly if using bottom heat and maintaining optimal soil temperature at 15-21°C. Seeds should sprout in 2 - 3 weeks.

**Starting:** Sow sage seeds 3mm (1/8") deep, and keep soil just moist, not wet; thin or transplant to 45-60cm (18-24") apart.

**Growing:** Optimal pH level: 6.0-6.5; in spring, trim any established plants back by a 1/3 to encourage new growth; once the flowers have finished in June/early July, trim the plants back again. A second bloom sometimes follows, and this pruning will keep plants bushy and compact. After a few years, sage bushes can become quite large - keep in check by pruning (cut 6-8" from top of plant twice per year for vigorous growth).

**Nutrient Preferences:** Sage requires well-drained soil with a good supply of nitrogen; prior to planting, mix in a thin layer of organic compost throughout soil. Sage shouldn't require any fertilizer, as these herbs are found to have a stronger flavour when grown in 'poor' soil.

**Harvest:** Trim back plant as needed (see *Growing* above). Be careful not to cut back more than half of each plant (or it will stop producing); fresh leaves should last 2-7 days in the refrigerator, however dried sage leaves can be stored in an airtight container in a dry and cool area, or can be stored frozen for an even better flavour.

**Companion Planting:** Sage repels both the cabbage moth and the carrot rust fly, so it's a great all around companion plant in the vegetable garden, but especially enjoys beans, cabbage, carrots, marjoram, peas, rosemary, strawberries, and tomatoes as neighbours; do not plant near cucumbers, which are sensitive to aromatic herbs.