

Grow Your Own Herbs

*This free tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club –
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Herbs add flavor and colour to cooking, turning even the simplest of dishes into gastronomic delights.

You can buy herbs at most supermarkets and greengrocers, either fresh or dried, but you'll be paying top dollar for ingredients you can easily grow at home.

You don't need garden beds; planted in small pots on a window sill you can harvest fresh herbs as you need them for only a few cents.

Follow this great advice from Cheapskater **Marion Finlay** and you'll have a wonderful herb garden in no time.

Grow Your Own

Where I can I grow as many of the herbs myself in the garden, in planter boxes and just amongst my other pot plants. Herbs thrive when they are planted alongside other plants and by planting chamomile amongst them (the herb Dr.) it will help all the other herbs grow up bigger and better and you have free chamomile for tea.

Seed Collecting for Perpetual Growing

If the herbs go to flower I dry the flowers by tying the stalks with string to form a bunch and then hanging upside down inside the house. I dry them for about 3 months. I then use the seeds for my new crop.

Preserving the Excess

If you have more rosemary or sage than you can use, preserve it by drying. Dried herbs last for approximately six months, giving you plenty of time to use them. Simply tie into bunches and hang in a cool, dark place until dry (in a cupboard is ideal). Then simply rub the sprigs between your hands to collect the dried leaves. Store in an air tight container and use as you would bought dried herbs.

Buy Direct for Freshness and a Smaller Carbon Footprint

If I have to buy herbs from the shops I always choose to buy from the local farmers markets as they are



easily half the price compared to the bigger supermarkets. I buy in bulk and freeze what I can, and then just use the herbs as needed. This prevents any wastage, allows you to buy in bulk even if cooking for one and ensures you always have herbs available no matter what time of the year.

To freeze.....

Garlic: I peel and then break up into segments and then store in the freezer in a plastic container. I then dice or grate the segments as needed into my meals. I freeze ginger whole and then just grate it into my dishes as needed.

Ginger: can just be placed into the freezer even without a cover, however a small zip lock bag is preferable.

Leafy herbs: such as coriander or mint you can make ice cubes filled with the leaves and then just use them as they are needed. I place a few leaves with just enough water to fill the ice cube trays and then just pop them out and leave to melt before using. They only take 20 minutes to melt or this can be sped up by placing the cubes in warm water.

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and energy and still have fun!
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