

Indoor Garden Growing

by Kris Hart

February 9 2022 1:00 PM



Growing gardens in the summer can leave one feeling a little bored through the winter. Although there are a lot of cold-hardy plants you can still grow outside with minimal assistance, it's actually a lot easier to grow some things indoors than you might think. Growing salad greens or micro-greens can be done relatively easily and it really doesn't take up too much space. This can be done in a 10x20 tray on a designated shelf with grow lights or it can even be done in a cup on a window sill. It all just depends on what you want to grow and how much of it you want to have. A few ideas that are common include lettuce mixes, herbs and micro-greens.

Some supplies you might want to have would include the seeds of your choice, a growing space, container(s), heat mats, potting soil mix, fertilizer and water. Really, all a plant needs to grow is soil, light and water. The additional supplies are certainly not “must haves,” they are just going to add to your success. Obviously, you need the seed for the plants you want to grow. Those seeds do need a fertile growing medium to grow in. I like to add some worm castings to my growing medium. This does a great job of feeding my plant starts slowly as they need it. Heat mats will keep your soil warm. Warm soil will help your seeds germinate and their roots to grow quicker. Grow lights are not necessary, but depending on your available space, they may make your plants grow bigger and stronger. Plants that are lacking enough light will grow long and thin, or “leggy.” It is hard for them to recover from this.

It is absolutely possible to grow on a window sill if your plants are able to obtain the amount of light they need. You will just want to keep a close eye on them and make sure they are. Lettuce can be grown in a shallow container like a 2-3” deep tray. They make a great indoor growing option and really become heavy producers as they get older. You can harvest regularly from them by taking the big outer leaves and leaving the inside leaves. You can also cut all of the leaves off and the plant will regrow. It will just take a little longer to replenish your harvest that way. Having indoor herb gardens are also very popular, but they will need a deeper container like a pot for their root systems. Micro-greens can grow extremely shallow, on a sheet pan. They can be harvested within a couple of weeks too!

Providing your garden beds with compost and mulch does so much for the life and vitality in your garden. I hope this encourages you to not only think about kitchen gardening, but also beauty gardening. I hope you get out there and get your hands dirty! Please feel free to share your experience and tips on my Instagram or Facebook page @BottomViewFarmIL.

Kris Hart lives in Litchfield and has a small hobby farm making strides towards sustainable living and organic/heirloom gardening. Contact her at kris.hart17@yahoo.com or find Bottom View Farm on Facebook and Instagram.

This story originally ran in the February issue of The Prairie Land Buzz Magazine. The Buzz Magazine is distributed free each month to over 400 locations, in 60 cities, in 11 Illinois counties. For more information visit <http://www.thebuzzmonthly.com>.