

Victory Garden Planning during a Pandemic



We're in the thick of it now. Areas are going into lockdown, and non-essential businesses are closing until further notice. It feels weird. It's scary. I'm exhausted. But I feel motivated, now more than ever, to keep up my gardening efforts. I've seen interest in [gardening](#) skyrocket. Is this the return of the victory garden?

I know a lot of you are anxious to get started and make up for lost time. While it's a little late to start crops like onions, there's still plenty of time to prep before the last frost date passes you by.

Starting Seeds

Last year, I wrote a series of posts about seed starting. The posts covered a lot of ground, so I recommend checking out a few of those articles. Many of them go over the many mistakes

you can make during the process and provide tips for avoiding fatal errors. Here's a roundup of a few posts you should read:

[Seed starting Mistakes to Avoid](#)

[Is Starting from Seed Worth it?](#)

[The Importance of Air Circulation](#)

[Seed Germination](#)

[Watering Seedlings](#)

Now is a great time to consider starting your victory garden [plants from seed](#). Why? With many stores shutting their physical locations, you'll likely have a tough time finding starts. Don't hesitate to contact your local nursery, though. Many locations are offering delivery for all sorts of items.

What Should I Grow in my Victory Garden?

I get this question a lot. Whether you have a ton of space or a small balcony, the answer is two-fold:

Things you like to eat

If vegetable gardening is your goal, think about what pops up often on your dinner plate. Don't bother with things that are easy if they don't appeal to your palate.

I love greens and eat a lot of kale, arugula, and bok choy, so those are some of the crops that feature prominently in my garden.

Conversely, I don't love cucumbers that much and rarely sacrifice a lot of growing space to them. One plant is more than enough and, I usually only use them for pickling. Some years, I don't bother with cukes at all.

Things that are easy

Unless you're an avid gardener or don't mind dealing with finicky crops, stick to things that are easy to grow. Remember, though, easy is relative. Something that's easy to grow in one climate may be a pain to grow in another. Or perhaps it's tougher to produce a particular crop in your area because of a recurring pest issue. I don't bother with corn anymore, because squirrels always make off with the goods when I'm not looking.

Your best bet is to pick plants that meet somewhere in the middle. The best plants for your victory garden are those that provide a significant reward compared to the effort expended. For instance, I love love, love, eggplants. They're a bit tricky to grow in my climate, because they prefer hot weather and don't enjoy temperature swings (which are common here, especially at the start and end of the summer). Still, I love them so much I'm willing to deal with these delicate plants. On the plus side, I never have pest issues with my eggplants. The result? A plant that provides a big reward upon harvest (because I love eating eggplant!) but doesn't require an unreasonable amount of effort to grow.