



Herbs for the Round Rock Area

Species:

Common Name	Latin Binomial	Lighting Requirements	Propagation Technique	Deer Resistant
Rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	yes
Lavender	<i>Lavandula officinalis</i>	Full sun	Layering, Cuttings, division	yes
Oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	yes
Marjoram	<i>Majorana hortensis</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	yes
Fennel	<i>Foeniculum dulce</i>	Full sun	seed	may taste
Basil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	Full sun	seed	yes
Cilantro	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>	Full sun	seed	may taste
Lemon Balm	<i>Melissa officinalis</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	may taste
Lemon Grass	<i>Cymbopogon citratus</i>	Full sun	division	yes
Lemon Verbena	<i>Aloysia triphylla</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	may taste
Ginger	<i>Zingerber officinalis</i>	shade	Rhizome division	may taste
Dill	<i>Anethum graveolens</i>	Full sun	seed	may taste
Thyme	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	yes
Parsley	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i>	Full sun	seed	yes
Mint	<i>Mentha piperita</i>	Shade to part shade	Rhizome division	yes
Sage	<i>Salvia officinalis</i>	Full sun	Layering/ cuttings	yes
Catnip	<i>Nepeta cataria</i>	Full sun to part shade	Layering/ cuttings	yes
Chamomile	<i>Anthemis nobilis</i>	Full sun to part shade	seed	yes
Roman German	<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i>			
Garlic	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Full sun	cloves	yes
Echinacea	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Full sun	seed	will taste
Chives	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	Full sun to part shade	Seed/division	yes

A Brief Synopsis:

Herbs are generally easy plants to grow if they have ample light, good drainage, and occasional feeding. Herbs are typically pest free and deer resistant due to their aromatic (high essential oil) content. The botanical nomenclature of herbs identifies their culinary and medicinal value. You will notice that many of the scientific names of herbs end with vulgaris, officinalis, or sativum. “Vulgaris” means common, “officinalis” means sold as an herb medicinal, and “sativum” means cultivated.

Site Selection:

Sun/Exposure

Most herbs need a minimum of 6 – 8 hours of sunlight daily. Afternoon shade is an option, but in our hot summers it is beneficial to the herbs. Some herbs thrive in the shade, such as mint and ginger. See the list above for light requirements. Herbs that prefer lots of sun will not do well planted in shady areas, they will often not grow and eventually die. If you notice an herb doing poorly, research the herb’s cultural requirements and then move it to an appropriate spot in your garden.

Drainage

Our rocky soil provides excellent drainage, which herbs require. Herbs may suffer during periods of heavy rainfall (especially in areas where water flows) and high humidity, so forethought on placement is beneficial. If your soil has poor drainage, plant herbs in a raised bed or in containers.

Soil Amendments:

Compost is always an added benefit to the herb garden, vegetable garden, or flower bed. The added organic matter also improves drainage.

Pruning & Harvesting:

Most herbs can be trimmed by a third at anytime of the year, if it is hotter be more conservative in your trimming. Harvest herbs in the morning, after the dew has evaporated off, but before it warms up too much. As the herbs heat up during the day they have less essential oil (aroma content.) Use sharp scissors or pruning shears; for small amounts of plant material, you may also pinch new growth. Pinching is also beneficial to keep herbs compact. Herbs such as basil will go to seed without pinching. Each time you see flower buds remove the entire spike.

Propagation:

Please see the column above. Most herbs can be propagated easily from layering, which is easily accomplished.

Preserving

Drying:

Most herbs dry easily, place the herbs in a small bundle, tie with string, yarn, or a rubber band. Hang the herbs in a cool, dry area, where they receive good air circulation.

Monitor the herbs for dryness; they should dry quickly unless humidity is high. This will vary depending on the thickness of the leaf, but generally they dry in one to two weeks.

Freezing:

Herbs can be torn into small pieces and placed in ice cube trays, pour water over the herbs and freeze. Thaw the ice cubes when you want to use, or simply place the ice cubes in the dishes (soup, beans) you are cooking.

Vinegar:

Many herbs may be preserved in vinegar, allow the herb to air dry. Place the herbs in a sterilized bottle, pour the vinegar (red, white, or apple cider) over the herb, and place a cap on the bottle. Let sit for at least two weeks. The longer the vinegar sits with the herb the more flavorful the vinegar becomes.

Good References:

Books

Herb Gardening in Texas Sol Meltzer

The Herb Encyclopedia Deni Bown

Southern Herb Growing Madeline Hill and Gwen Barclay Jean Hardey

Herbs for Texas Howard Garrett with Odena Brannam

Websites

Growing Herbs for the Home Gardener (South Carolina Extension)

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8110.html>

P. Allen Smith's Growing Herb Page

<http://www.pallensmith.com/features/herbs/>

UK Website for Growing Herbs

<http://www.recipes4us.co.uk/Growing%20Herbs.htm>