

**Botanical name:**  
**Genus: Ocimum**  
**Species: basilicum**

**Common Name(s):** Basil,  
Thai basil, Italian basil  
**Latin Family Name:**  
Lamiaceae  
**English Family Name:**  
Mint or Nettle

### The plant

**Origin; country or region:** Native to tropical regions from Central Africa to South east Asia

**Growth habit:** Basil is an annual, or sometimes perennial, herb used for its leaves

**Flower description:** ) Flowers are small and white  
The flowers are insignificant but very popular with bees

**Blooming period/availability:** Perennial

**Leaf/Foliage Description:** Leaf colors span from rich green to deep purple, with smooth or crinkled leaves

**Usage :** Basil plants are one of the most popular herbs to grow and also one of the easiest

All types of basil grow easily in warm, sunny weather

#### STRENGTHS/OPPORTUNITIES:

This fast-growing herb thrives equally well in gardens and containers

Miniature varieties are also available which are great for mass plantings along the edge of flower beds

#### WEAKNESS:

Basil is a heat lover, not ideal for cold climates

Prone to pest problems



**TRIVIA:** It is closely identified with Italian cooking, although it is originally from India  
The fragrant edible leaves are great in soups, stews, and other meat dishes

### Care & Handling

**Longevity:** 2-4 years

**Water requirements:** Water basil deeply on a regular basis, but be sure its soil is well drained

Use mulch to help keep moisture in

**Light:** Basil grows best with six to eight hours of full sun each day

**Soil/Nutrition requirements:** Basil does best in moist, rich, well-draining soil

It's a good idea to amend your soil with compost or other nutrient-rich mulch

**Special care/remarks:** Ornamental varieties often have showy purple foliage, making them perfect for containers

Basil works in almost any type of pot or container, even a kiddie pool

But there are two rules for success: keeping the soil moist and not crowding the plants

