VEGETABLES · A SUNNY PATIO IN WARM WEATHER

Let's grow bush bean.

Phaseolus vulgaris

This plan is for **Blue Lake 274 bush snap bean**

A few crisp green beans, without a tall trellis.

5-gallon pot **6 seeds → 3 plants**

Before you start

Sow outdoors after frost danger has passed and the mix has warmed; leave enough frost-free growing time for the packet's maturity estimate.

By jennyzhuang

Sources checked September 23, 2026 View sources ↗

LIGHT

A sunny spot

At least 6 hours of direct sun; a longer sunny day helps.

WATER

Steady moisture

Pay extra attention when flowers and pods are forming.

FEEDING

No routine top-up

Start with fresh enriched mix; too much nitrogen can delay pods.

BEFORE YOU START

Your little kit.

- ✓ One draining 5-gallon pot, at least 12 inches deep
- ✓ Fresh potting mix and a watering can; no tall trellis needed
- ✓ 6 Blue Lake 274 bush snap-bean seeds

THE SOIL

Miracle-Gro Organic Potting Mix (US, feeds for up to 2 months)

Start with what's on this list. Add plant food only when the feeding section says it's needed.

YOUR SIMPLE GROWING PLAN

One pot. Here's the plan.

A sunny patio in warm weather. Start with **seeds**.

THE POT

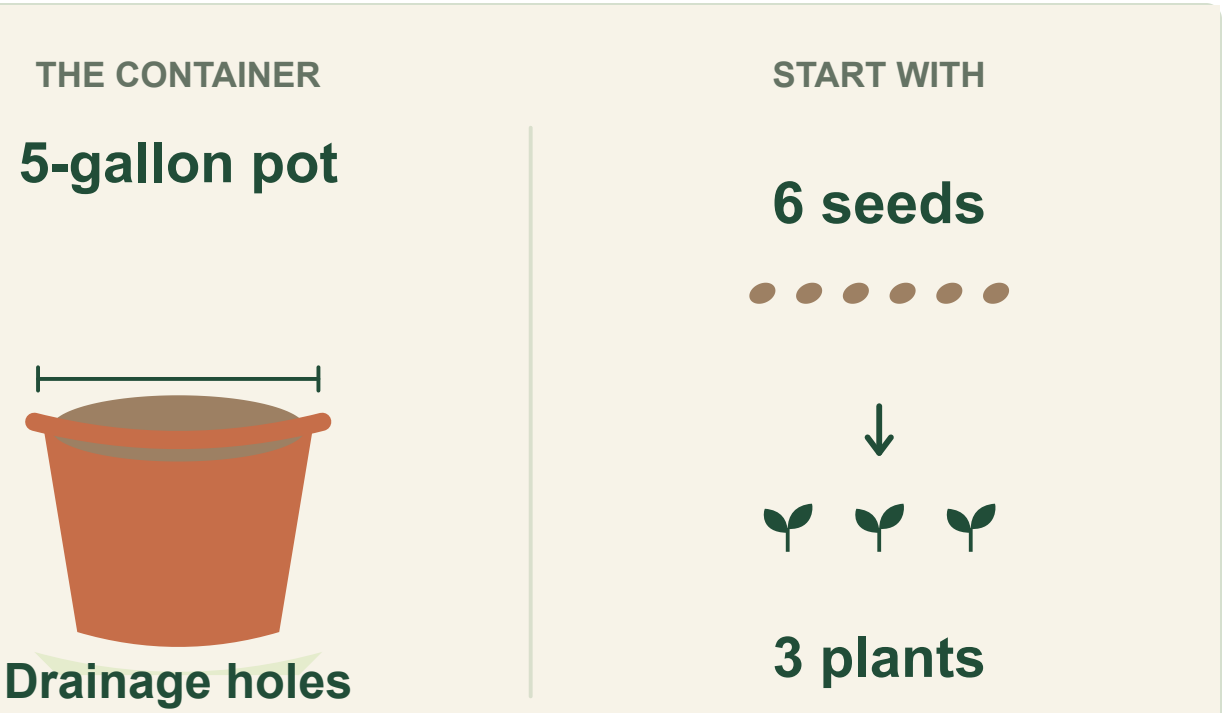
5-gallon pot

At least 12 inches deep with drainage. Give the plants space beyond the rim.

HOW MANY

6 seeds → 3 plants

Two seeds at each of 3 spots, about 5–6 inches apart.



5-gallon pot · 6 seeds → 3 plants At least 12 inches deep with drainage. Give the plants space beyond the rim. Two seeds at each of 3 spots, about 5–6 inches apart. Original illustration; not to scale.

01

Wait for warm conditions

Choose a frost-free period with the mix at least 60°F. Fill the pot with damp mix and leave 1 inch below the rim.

02

Mark three planting spots

Make a triangle with the spots about 5–6 inches apart. Sow 2 seeds at each spot, 1 inch deep, and water gently.

03

Keep three plants

After seedlings establish, snip the weaker seedling at each spot. Keep the mix moist while they emerge, but not saturated.

04

Pick tender pods

Check often once pods form. Pick while they are slender and before the seeds bulge. Hold the stem as you detach a pod so you do not pull up the plant.

Help with the setup: drainage holes and saucers · potting mix vs. garden soil.

Other ways to start

Plant three young starts

Use one young bush-bean seedling at each of the three spots, keeping each root ball intact. Choose individual starts rather than pulling apart a crowded root ball. Direct sowing is usually the simpler option for this quick crop.

YOUR EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Water & fertilizer at a glance.

WATER WHEN

Check each morning. Water as the top inch starts drying, then drain. Keep moisture steady during flowering and pod filling.

FERTILIZER

No added fertilizer for this starting plan

AMOUNT

None

WHAT THAT AMOUNT COVERS

No fertilizer dose to calculate.

HOW OFTEN TO FEED

No routine feeding.

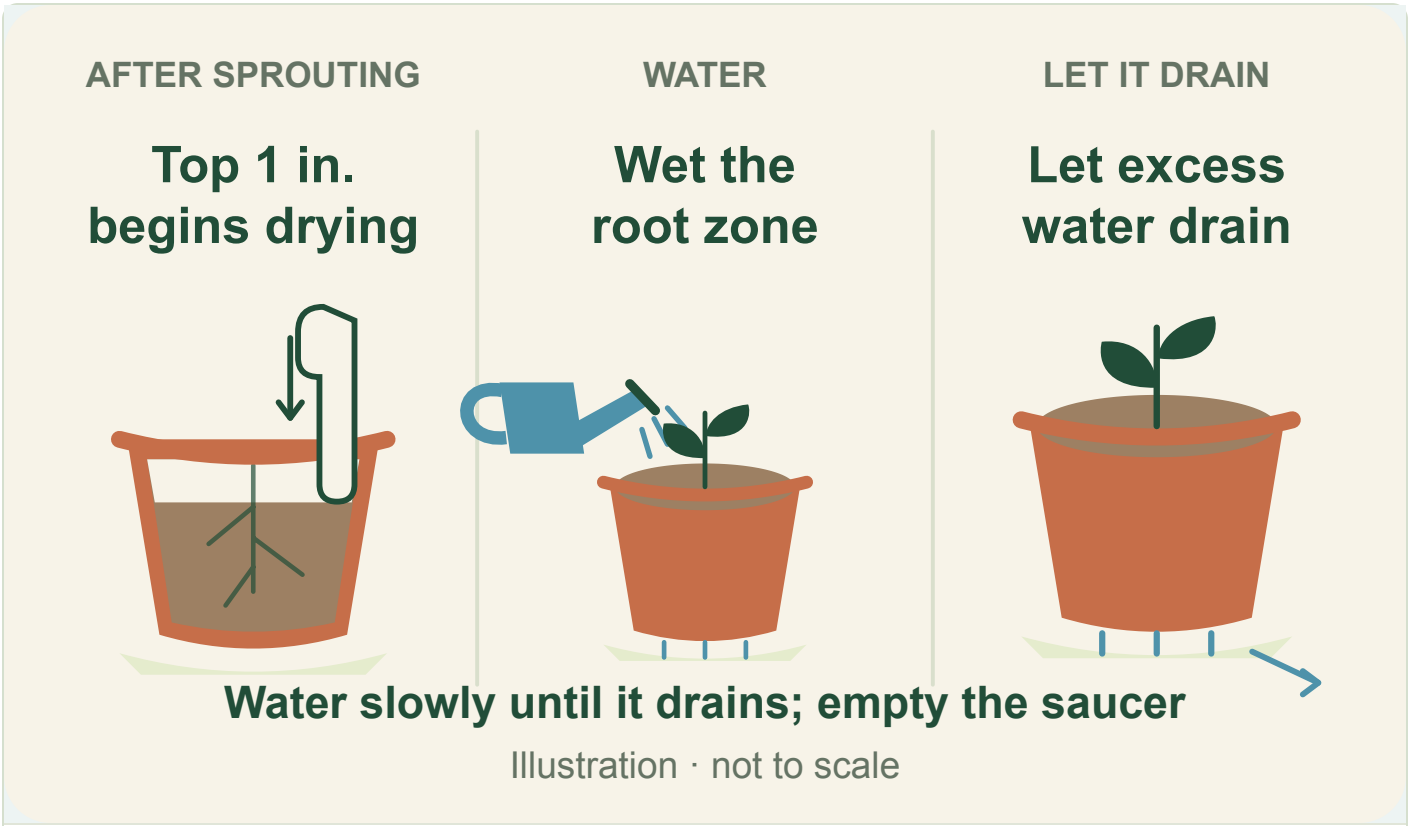
WHEN TO START OR PAUSE

Begin with fresh enriched mix. If later growth is weak, check warmth, light, moisture, and roots before reassessing nutrients for another sowing.

01 / EVERYDAY CARE

When to water.

Check every morning. Water when the top inch is beginning to dry and let excess drain below. Keep moisture steady during flowering and pod filling. In hot or windy weather the pot may need another check later; cold, saturated mix can rot seeds before they emerge.



Check before watering. Check each morning. Water as the top inch starts drying, then drain. Keep moisture steady during flowering and pod filling. Original illustration; not to scale.

> **The easy rule**
>
> Check first. Water only when the plant needs it.

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02 / PLANT FOOD

Exactly what to feed it.

With fresh enriched mix, add no fertilizer at sowing and do not begin a routine 7–14-day liquid feed.
Extra nitrogen can make leaves at the expense of a timely bean harvest.

THIS STARTING PLAN

No added fertilizer



Follow the conditions in this plan

Illustration · not to scale

None No fertilizer dose to calculate. No routine feeding. Begin with fresh enriched mix. If later growth is weak, check warmth, light, moisture, and roots before reassessing nutrients for another sowing. Original illustration; not to scale.

FRESH MIX FIRST; NO AUTOMATIC TOP-UP

Start this crop without extra fertilizer

The mix supplies the starting nutrients and a short crop may finish before a top-up is needed. If plants remain weak, check warmth, sun, moisture, and roots before diagnosing a nutrient shortage. For a later sowing in the same mix, reassess its nutrients rather than assuming the first crop left everything the next one needs.

03 / WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Sprouting and picking snap beans

In suitable warmth, shoots often appear in 7–14 days. Blue Lake 274 is listed at about 58 days to harvest, with weather affecting the result. Three plants give a small picking, not a family-sized supply.

When to sow a warm-season crop

Sow after frost danger and once the mix has warmed. For another pot later, leave enough frost-free growing time for the packet's maturity estimate.

For regional planting windows, find your local Cooperative Extension office ↗.

Something looking off?

Why did the seeds never come up?

Cold, wet mix can rot bean seeds. Check temperature and drainage before resowing. Adding fertilizer will not make cold soil suitable.

Why are there plenty of leaves but few pods?

Excess nitrogen and very hot weather can both interfere with pod production. Check your feeding history and conditions instead of adding more fertilizer.

Does Blue Lake need a trellis?

This recipe names Blue Lake 274, a bush type. Other Blue Lake beans are pole varieties and need tall support. Read the packet's growth habit, not just the first two words.

Thinning and picking green pods

Thin to three plants in a triangle

Three final plants at 5–6-inch spacing are our roomy container adaptation of garden spacing. The second seed at each spot is insurance; thinning is part of the plan.

Pick pods while they are tender

Pick the green pods while tender, rather than leaving them to dry on the plant. Pole beans, runner beans, and dry-bean harvests need different space or timing.

BEHIND THIS GUIDE

Where the advice comes from.

Plant care is based on the sources below. Planting layouts and beginner routines combine that guidance into one practical plan; they are editorial choices, not results from a Plant Care Steps growing trial.

- University of Maryland: beans and supplemental nitrogen ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-beans-home-garden
- University of Minnesota: bean planting, thinning, and problems ↗
  https://extension.umn.edu/garden-and-home/yard-and-garden/gardening-in-minnesota/growing-beans
- Burpee: Blue Lake 274 bush habit and harvest ↗
  https://www.burpee.com/products/bean-bush-blue-lake-274-prod000576
- University of Maryland: container growing ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-vegetables-containers-and-salad-tables
- University of Maryland: young bean transplants ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/starting-vegetable-seeds-indoors
- Manufacturer: starter feed in the named potting mix ↗
  https://scottsmiraclegro.com/en-us/brands/miracle-gro/products/potting-mix/miracle-gro-organic-potting-mix/78951430.html

Something needs updating? Suggest a correction

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Compiled with AI assistance. These first-edition guides have not yet had an independent horticultural review. Read our editorial approach.