VEGETABLES · A WARM PATIO WITH SPACE FOR A SMALL SUPPORT

Let's grow cucumber.

Cucumis sativus

This plan is for **Bush Champion cucumber**

One sunny pot, with crisp cucumbers to slice.

5-gallon pot **3 seeds → 1 plant**

Before you start

Start outdoors after frost danger has passed and the mix is warm; choose a sunny spot with room for the support.

By jennyzhuang

Sources checked September 23, 2026 View sources ↗

LIGHT

Lots of sun

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

WATER

Keep moisture steady

A fruiting pot can dry quickly. Check every day.

FEEDING

Regular after starter feed

Use one measured feeding program during active growth.

BEFORE YOU START

Your little kit.

- ✓ One stable 5-gallon pot, at least 12 inches deep
- ✓ 3 Bush Champion cucumber seeds
- ✓ Fresh potting mix, a 3–4-foot cage or trellis, and soft ties

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 warm patio with space for a small support. Start with **seeds**.

THE POT

5-gallon pot

At least 12 inches deep, with drainage and a stable base.

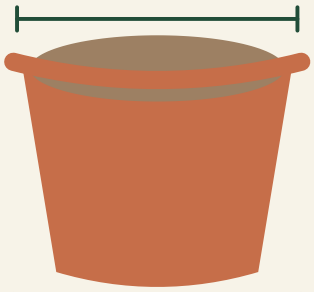
HOW MANY

3 seeds → 1 plant

Use compact Bush Champion; leave room for about a 25-inch spread.

THE CONTAINER

5-gallon pot



Drainage holes

START WITH

3 seeds







1 plant

Illustration · not to scale

5-gallon pot · 3 seeds → 1 plant At least 12 inches deep, with drainage and a stable base. Use compact Bush Champion; leave room for about a 25-inch spread. Original illustration; not to scale.

01

Set up the pot and support

Dampen the mix and anchor the cage or trellis securely before roots fill the pot. Leave room for foliage beyond the rim.

02

Sow in warm mix

After frost danger, wait until the mix is around 70°F at seed depth. Sow 3 seeds near the center, ½ inch deep. Keep the surface evenly moist.

03

Keep one strong plant

Once true leaves appear, snip extras at soil level. Guide the remaining vine toward its support and use loose ties if needed.

04

Pick before fruit gets old

Bush Champion produces slicing cucumbers about 8–12 inches long. Check developing fruit often and cut it free while green, before yellowing or coarse seeds.

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

Other ways to start

Buy one young compact start

Plant one labeled bush or compact cucumber seedling with its root ball intact, at the previous soil level. For a cultivar other than Bush Champion, use its label's fruit size and maturity instead of the figures in this plan. Let an indoor-grown start adjust gradually to outdoor conditions. Do not separate a tangle of older cucumber seedlings.

YOUR EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Water & fertilizer at a glance.

WATER WHEN

Water as the top inch starts drying, keeping deeper roots moist during fruiting. Check daily and let excess drain.

FERTILIZER

Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16)

AMOUNT

1 tablespoon in 1 US gallon of water

WHAT THAT AMOUNT COVERS

Mix into water. Apply only enough solution to wet this pot and drain; the mixing batch is not the amount to pour on.

HOW OFTEN TO FEED

Every 14 days during active growth.

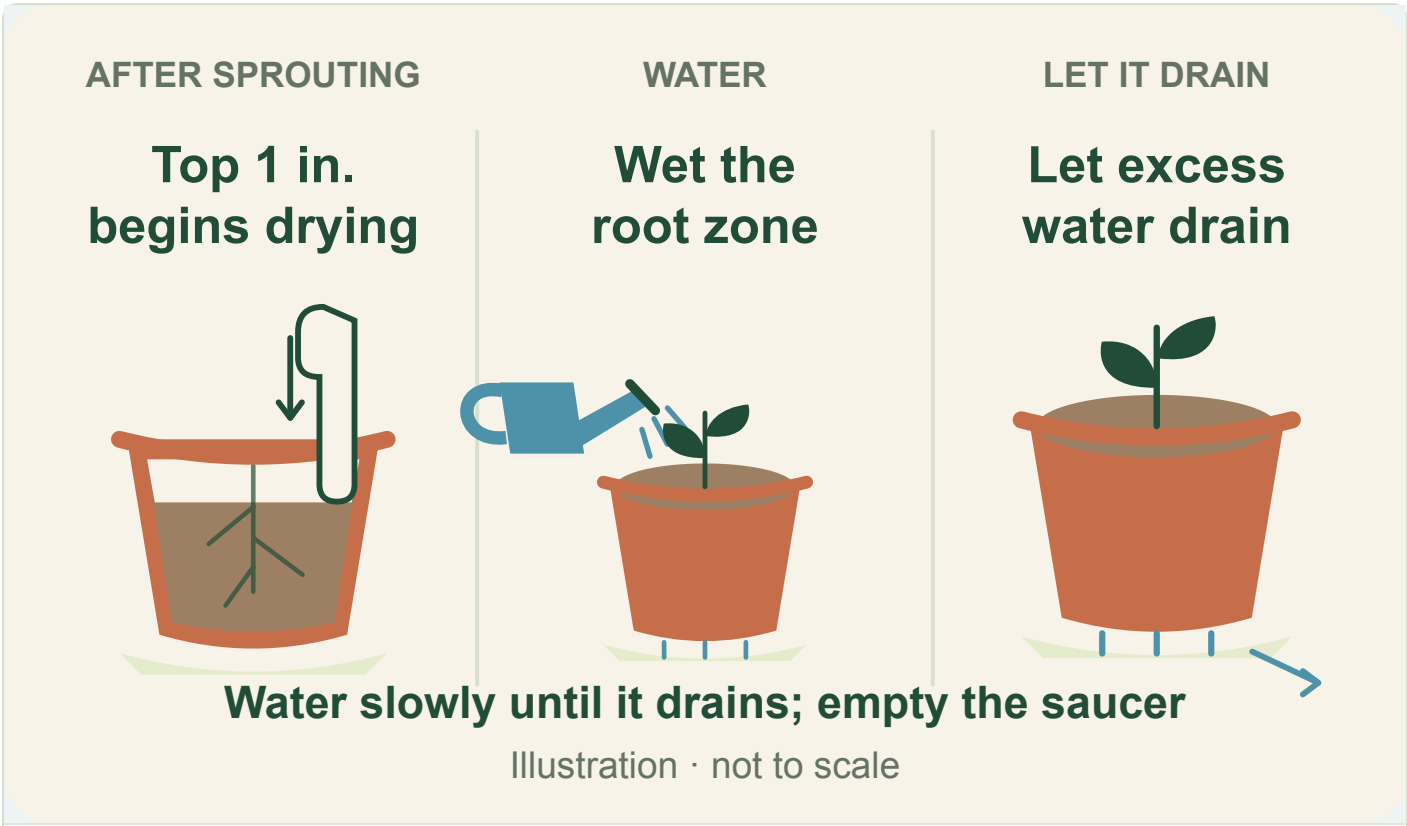
WHEN TO START OR PAUSE

Wait until the fresh mix's starter feed is spent. Feed only during active growth; pause when growth stops.

01 / EVERYDAY CARE

When to water.

Check each morning. When the top inch begins to dry, water slowly until excess drains. Keep deeper roots consistently moist during fruiting and check again in hot or windy weather. Skip while the mix is wet. A weekly fixed amount will not fit both a small seedling and a loaded summer vine.



Check before watering. Water as the top inch starts drying, keeping deeper roots moist during fruiting. Check daily and let excess drain. 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.

Add no extra fertilizer at planting with the fresh enriched mix. Follow that bag's feeding directions before starting a top-up; a fruiting cucumber may use the starter supply sooner than a small herb.



1 tablespoon in 1 US gallon of water Mix into water. Apply only enough solution to wet this pot and drain; the mixing batch is not the amount to pour on. Every 14 days during active growth. Wait until the fresh mix's starter feed is spent. Feed only during active growth; pause when growth stops. Original illustration; not to scale.



US PRODUCT REFERENCE

Miracle-Gro

Water Soluble All Purpose

24-8-16

Soluble: mix into water

Check the official US product ↗

Illustrated reference; check the manufacturer's current packaging and US label.

ONCE THE STARTER NUTRIENTS NEED REPLENISHING

Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16)

Mix 1 tablespoon of the US 24-8-16 product into 1 gallon of water. Feed at the roots every 14 days during active growth after the starter feed is used up. This combines the manufacturer's outdoor dilution with Maryland's container-feeding interval. Use only enough to wet this pot and drain; the gallon is a mixing batch.

Check the manufacturer's product page ↗

Use the named US formulation. A different product or concentration needs different directions. The amount mixed is a batch, not a dose to pour into one pot.

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03 / WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Sprouting and first cucumbers

Seeds commonly emerge in 7–14 days in suitable warmth. Bush Champion is listed at about 55 days to harvest from sowing; weather and growing conditions affect timing. Compact vines still need space and regular picking.

When to start cucumbers outdoors

This is a warm-season outdoor crop. Start after frost risk with warm mix. In short-summer areas, a healthy young start can help; cold weather cannot be corrected with extra fertilizer.

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

Something looking off?

Why do I have flowers but no cucumbers?

The first flowers may be male. Ordinary cucumber varieties need pollen transferred to female flowers, often by bees. Leave flowers accessible; compact does not mean a plant makes fruit without pollination.

Why is it wilting when the mix is already wet?

Do not keep pouring water onto wet roots. Check drainage and look for cucumber beetles or other damage; persistent wilt can have causes beyond thirst.

What is the white powder on the leaves?

Powdery mildew is a possibility. Keep air moving around the vine, remove infected debris, and use a suitable resistant variety for future crops. Inspect before choosing a treatment.

Choosing compact vines and adding support

Check the packet for bush or compact

Bush Champion is our named example. Full-size vines need different space. Terms such as burpless or seedless do not tell you that a cucumber stays compact.

Anchor a small cage or trellis

A 3–4-foot cage or trellis keeps fruit more accessible and off the potting mix. Anchor it securely; a narrow pot with a top-heavy vine can tip in wind.

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.

- Burpee: Bush Champion size, fruit, and maturity ↗
  https://www.burpee.com/products/cucumber-bush-champion-prod000686
- Burpee: cucumber sowing and emergence ↗
  https://support.burpee.com/support/solutions/articles/60000961772-learn-about-cucumbers
- University of Minnesota: cucumber temperature, support, and care ↗
  https://extension.umn.edu/garden-and-home/yard-and-garden/gardening-in-minnesota/growing-cucumbers
- University of Maryland: container sizes and feeding ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-vegetables-containers-and-salad-tables
- University of Maryland: cucumber pollination ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-cucumbers-home-garden
- University of Maryland: cucumber problem key ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/key-common-problems-cucumbers
- Manufacturer: US fertilizer formula and application directions ↗
  https://scottsmiraclegro.com/en-us/brands/miracle-gro/products/plant-food-and-care/miracle-gro-water-soluble-all-purpose-plant-food.html
- 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.