HERBS · A SEPARATE POT ON A PATIO OR PORCH

Let's grow mint.

Mentha spicata

This plan is for **Spearmint**

Fresh leaves, kept happily in their own pot.

3-gallon pot **1 nursery start**

Before you start
Give mint its own outdoor pot, and protect a newly bought plant's tender growth if frost is forecast.

By jennyzhuang

Sources checked September 22, 2026 View sources ↗

LIGHT
Sun or part shade
A bright spot with morning sun is a useful starting place.

WATER
Likes moisture
Water before the whole pot dries out; let excess water drain.

FEEDING
Light feeding
Too much fertilizer is not the shortcut to better flavor.

BEFORE YOU START

Your little kit.

- ✓ One 3-gallon pot with drainage
- ✓ 1 spearmint nursery plant
- ✓ Fresh potting mix and scissors

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 separate pot on a patio or porch. Start with **nursery start**.

THE POT

3-gallon pot

Keep it separate; mint spreads vigorously in a garden.

HOW MANY

1 nursery start

Choose labeled spearmint for this recipe.

THE CONTAINER

3-gallon pot

START WITH

1 nursery start



Illustration · not to scale

3-gallon pot · 1 nursery start Keep it separate; mint spreads vigorously in a garden. Choose labeled spearmint for this recipe. Original illustration; not to scale.

01

Give mint its own home

Place the pot on a patio or another surface where escaping runners are easy to spot.

02

Plant at the same depth

Keep the top of the root ball level with the new mix. Water thoroughly.

03

Check the pot daily

Feel the mix before adding water. Tip away water collected in the saucer.

04

Harvest the tips

Once growth is established, snip young stems for the kitchen. Keep enough leaves for regrowth.

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

Other ways to start

Divide an existing plant

Separate a rooted section from an established, healthy mint plant and pot it up at its previous depth. Keep it moist while it settles in.

YOUR EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Water & fertilizer at a glance.

WATER WHEN

Check each morning. Water when the top inch is dry; keep deeper roots lightly moist and drain excess water.

FERTILIZER

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

AMOUNT

1½ teaspoons 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 3–4 weeks outdoors.

WHEN TO START OR PAUSE

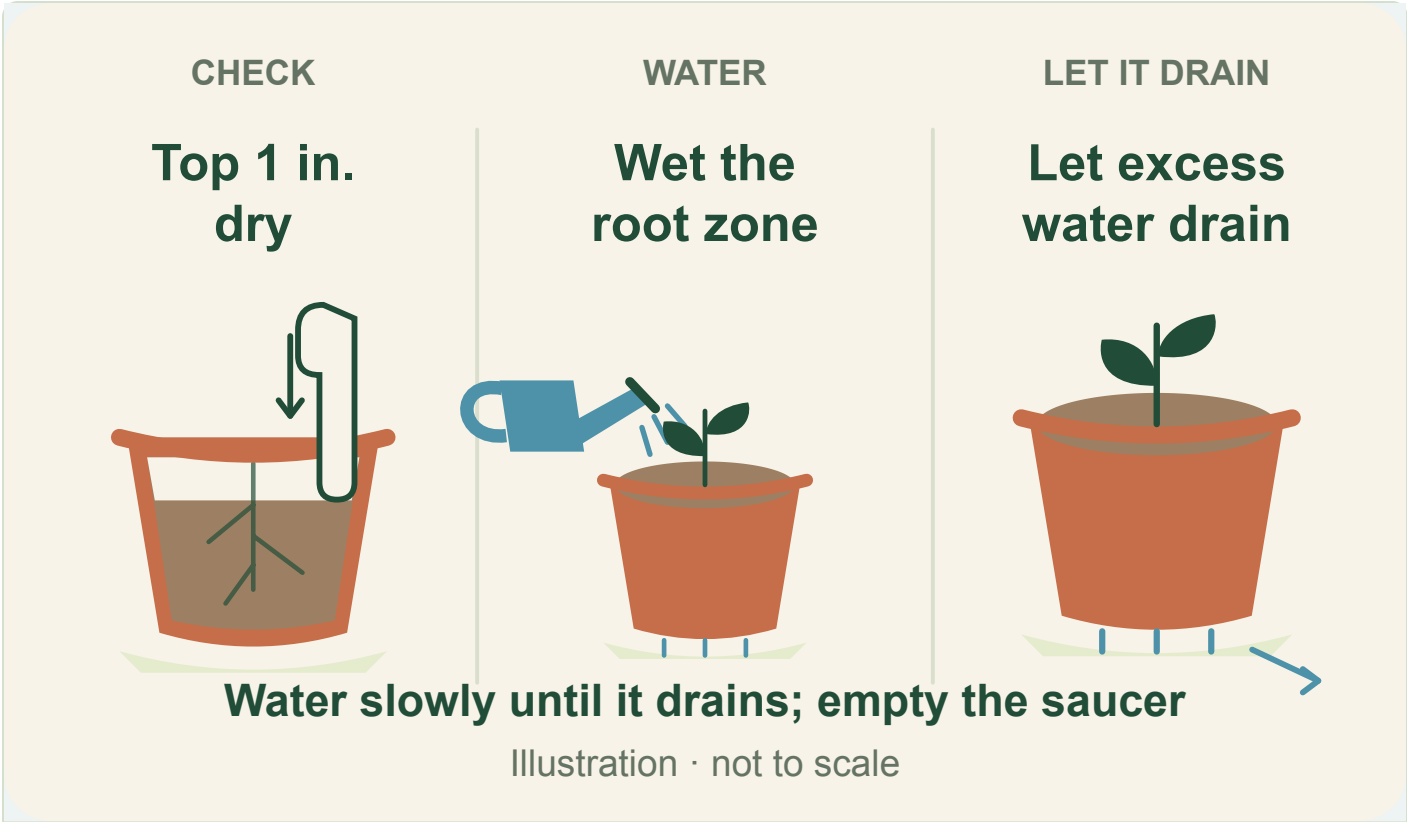
Wait until the fresh mix's starter feed is spent. Feed only during active growth; pause when growth stops.

Half the product's outdoor concentration; use this lighter herb recipe after starter feed ends.

01 / EVERYDAY CARE

When to water.

Check each morning. If the top inch has dried, water slowly until the pot drains. Keep the root zone lightly moist; standing water is not helpful.



Check before watering. Check each morning. Water when the top inch is dry; keep deeper roots lightly moist and drain excess water. 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.

No added fertilizer at planting with fresh enriched mix. After its starter feed runs out, use the light feeding recipe below only while mint is growing.



1½ teaspoons 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 3–4 weeks outdoors. 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.

A SPECIFIC US PRODUCT

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

Mix 1½ teaspoons of the US 24-8-16 product in 1 gallon of water; use at the roots every 3–4 weeks outdoors. The reduced concentration and interval follow University of Minnesota's container-herb guidance. Skip feeding when growth has paused.

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

When to start picking mint

Once the plant has settled in and stems reach about 3–4 inches, you can begin taking small cuttings.

Choosing and protecting a nursery start

A nursery start is the easiest way to keep the flavor true to the label. Protect newly bought tender growth from frost.

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

Something looking off?

Can I put mint straight in my raised bed?

It spreads aggressively. A separate container is the easier option if you do not want it competing with everything around it.

Does a pot stop it spreading forever?

No. Watch for stems or roots escaping drainage holes, and move or divide the plant before it roots into nearby soil.

Which mint should I buy?

This recipe uses spearmint. Peppermint and other mints have different flavors; buy a clearly labeled nursery plant.

Choosing and containing mint

Choose a named mint for its flavor

Mints are a varied group. Buying a named plant gives you a more predictable flavor than an unlabeled seed mixture.

Trim runners and divide a crowded plant

Check the pot edge for runners, trim what you will use, and remove damaged foliage. Divide an overcrowded plant rather than forcing ever more growth with fertilizer.

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.

- Utah State University: mint care and spreading ↗
  https://extension.usu.edu/yardandgarden/research/mint-in-the-garden
- University of Minnesota: propagation and feeding ↗
  https://extension.umn.edu/garden-and-home/yard-and-garden/gardening-in-minnesota/growing-herbs
- University of Maryland: container sizes ↗
  https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-vegetables-containers-and-salad-tables
- 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.