

# CAN YOU DIG IT!



## Transplanting

Transplanting seedlings that you have started yourself or bought in a garden center or farmer's market is a quick and easy way to get your garden started!



### Don't Transplant...

It's not a good idea to transplant root crops like carrots, beets, radishes, parsnips or turnips. These crops have long and fragile roots that almost always break during transplanting, and disturb the growth of the plant.

All plants need gentle care when being transplanted. When we remove a transplant out of its pot we tear off many tiny microscopic root hairs that the plant uses to get nutrients and water. This makes the plant very vulnerable to dehydration (water stress) for a few days after transplanting. Also, the plant cannot get nutrients properly until it re-grows its tiny root hairs, which takes about 24 – 48 hours.

This is why we often see transplants drooping and wilted right after they are planted. This is called Transplant Shock.



*Do not transplant root vegetables*



### Avoid Transplant Shock and give your transplant a great start!

1. Pick a day that is overcast and cooler, or on sunny days transplant early in the morning or later in the evening, after the heat of the day has passed.
2. Water transplants very well the day before transplanting to ensure they are fully hydrated.
3. Prepare a liquid nutrient dip for your transplants using fish fertilizer or kelp fertilizer (mixed according to the directions on the label for vegetables).
4. When you take the plants out of the pot, gently shake some of the soil off their roots and loosen any tightly wound roots.
5. Dip the whole root ball (but not the leaves) into the nutrient solution.

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### Make your plant roots happy with the proper planting technique

1. Always dig a hole slightly bigger and deeper than the pot your plant is in. If in doubt, dig a deeper hole, never a shallower one.
2. Once you have loosened the roots of your plant, hold the plant in the hole and make sure all the roots are facing downwards or horizontal. If the roots are squished and forced upwards (into a J shape) the root will die and the plant will have to grow another.
3. Gently push soil all around the roots, ensuring they stay pointing downwards, and make sure to only bury the roots, and not the stem or leaves of the plant.
4. Press down firmly all around the plant to make sure there are no big pockets of air underneath the soil.
5. Give your plant another sprinkle of water – and some words of encouragement. And enjoy watching it grow!



Tomato Seedlings

### Some plants need to be started indoors

In our climate certain plants *must* be started indoors and then transplanted when the weather is warmer. Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and tomatillos all need to be started in the spring, indoors, then transplanted outdoors once the weather warms up, usually in May or June.

Other plants, like leeks, onions, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, kale, squash, zucchini and cucumbers can be directly planted as seeds, or can also be started indoors earlier than they could be planted outside, which can give you an early start for these vegetables.