



Seed Starting with Soil Blocks

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Soil

Use the blocking mix recipe at bottom of this page or soil labeled for soil blocking. Other soils will make the blocks, but they will not hold up over the course of the indoor growing period.

Mixing

Mix 3-parts blocking mix to 1-part water. A good measure to start with 20 cups blocking mixed with approximately 6-7 cups of water. This will make several hundred of the small 3/4" blocks or thirty-two 2" blocks. Blocking mix leftovers can be left to dry out and can be re-wet to use later. Do not cover and store wet mix. Wetting and mixing the blocking mix is much like mixing concrete. The desired consistency is that of soggy oatmeal so it can be pushed out of the blocking tool in a firm block.

Blocking and Trays

Use flat bottom trays with no ridges or drainage holes. Push the blocker down into the blocking mix 2-to-3 times to fill the chambers. Scrape the excess mix off and place the blocker on the tray, engage the plunger to eject the blocks. If you experience trouble, do not despair it takes a little practice. The problem most often encounter is too little water, experiment to find what works best. The quality of your blocks is essential to how well they hold up over the course of the next weeks of growing.

Sowing Seeds

Each block has a depression to receive the seed. Sow one seed per block according to the seed instructions. Those that need light to germinate are firmly placed on the surface and those that need darkness are pushed further down into the block.

Add Heat and Light to Maximize Seed Germination and Growth

You will experience quicker and a higher rate of germination when bottom heat is used during the germination stage. Our seedling heat mat keeps the soil evenly warm, improves your germination success and helps to prevent soil borne diseases. Once 50% of the seeds have germinated move to light.

To produce healthy, short and stocky seedlings give them 16 hours of intense light daily. Tall leggy seedlings are a result of low light conditions. Our tabletop grow light takes only 24" of countertop and can support 160 small soil blocks.

Caring for Your Blocks

- Blocks should dry out between daily watering. Do not allow the blocks to sit in water.
- Water from the side of the tray; do not pour water directly on blocks.
- After the seeds sprout, feed with a liquid organic fertilizer weekly according to fertilizer directions.

Planting the Blocks

Plants produced by blocking can be planted sooner than other growing methods. Young plants adapt more readily and don't suffer from root bounding or other consequences as more mature plants can. Before planting, acclimate the seedlings to outdoor conditions. Sit in a covered spot with limited sun and wind exposure. Increase exposure until planting in the garden 5-7 days later. When planting, be sure to cover the soil block with garden soil to prevent drying out. After planting water daily for the first week and then approximately 1 inch of water weekly.

Blocking Mix Recipe

16 cups sifted peat moss or coco fiber

4 cups sifted compost

1/4 cup green sand and 1/4 cup rock phosphate powder (or 1/2 cup [TGW Nutrient Mix](#))

Mix ingredients dry.

Mix 3 parts dry mixture to 1-part water.