

Garden Starter System Instructions

With the Garden Starter System, you can use your AeroGarden to start seedlings for transplanting into an outdoor garden. This system includes supplies for starting 36 or 66 seedlings (depending on the model you have).

You can start your Spring plants like lettuce and broccoli, then clean your tray and start over with Summer plants such as tomatoes and cucumbers. You can also use your Garden Starter System to clone plant cuttings!

What's Inside Your Garden Starter System



Getting Started When Should I Plant?

Seeds start quickly in an AeroGarden! In about 4 weeks (or less) your plants will be ready to transplant into an outdoor garden. Don't start your plants too soon!

If you are growing a cool-weather crop such as lettuce or broccoli, you can transplant as soon as the soil can be worked in Spring.

If you are growing a warm-weather crop such as tomatoes or peppers, wait to transplant until the danger of a late frost has passed. Your seed packages will tell you the right time to plant outdoors in your area. Back up about 1 month from that planting date to start your seeds in the Garden Starter Tray.

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Getting Ready to Plant

If you've already grown seedlings in your Garden Starter Tray, see "Starting Again" on page 4, then return here.

1. Unplug your AeroGarden.
2. Remove Grow Surface/Deck from AeroGarden Bowl and store. It is not needed when using the Garden Starter Tray.
3. If your AeroGarden Bowl has support struts (crossbars) attached in the inside of the Bowl, remove them to allow space for the Starter Tray.
4. Add cool tap water or distilled water to the Bowl to the "Fill to Here" indicator. In the ULTRA, fill to within 1.5 inches of the top of the Bowl. Do not use well water or softened water. The AeroGarden has a low water level indicator, but we encourage you to check the water level frequently and keep the Bowl full.
5. Place Grow Sponges in openings in the Garden Starter Tray, if not already in place.
6. Place Garden Starter Tray into AeroGarden Bowl. The tray will only fit in one direction. If it does not fit, turn it around and try it again (see Front/Back labels on Seed Starter Log). Try to position Grow Sponges level with top of Garden Starter Tray.



The Garden Starter Tray will fit easily in your AeroGarden Bowl.



If applicable, remove support struts (crossbars).

Seeding Your Garden Starter Tray

1. After Grow Sponges are evenly moist, insert seeds of your choosing in the opening in the Grow Sponge using fingertips or tweezers. Plant several seeds per grow sponge. As you plant seeds, use the included Seed Starter Log to label space or row with the seed name.
2. Add 8ml of nutrients to water Bowl.
3. Plug in your AeroGarden.
4. Press "Select" button to set AeroGarden to "Herbs" setting. On the ULTRA model, use "Quick Plant" setting and follow on-screen instructions, then select "Garden Starter Tray" when choosing Garden Type.
5. If your model has a 24-hr light option or customizable settings, seedlings can benefit from using this option for the first 3–4 weeks.
6. Set light hood at lowest possible setting — as close to plants as possible!
7. Press 'Reset' button to reset nutrient timer. Timer will reset automatically in an AeroGarden ULTRA when using "Quick Plant" option.



The opening in the Grow Sponge is adequate for most small and medium sized seeds. You can increase or decrease the size of the opening by adding or removing small pieces of the Grow Sponge.

SEEDING TIPS

- Use outer spaces in the Tray for seedlings with large, spreading leaves (eg., peppers and tomatoes) to prevent them from shading other seedlings.
- Some seeds will always sprout faster than others, especially with different plant types.

Growing Your Seedlings

Add new nutrients every two weeks when the 'Add Nutrient' reminder activates, and keep water level full. Your AeroGarden will deliver perfect light, water, and nutrients for your seedlings!

GROW TIPS

- Feeding your plants more than the recommended amount will not make them grow faster. In fact, it could hurt the plants.
- Some plants, such as salad and herbs, grow best when you allow many sprouts to grow per pod.
- Tomatoes and peppers grow best with just one plant per pod. Cut out smaller plants when they are about 1" tall, and leave just one healthy plant per pod.
- For best growth, keep water level topped off and don't wait for the 'Add Water' alert

Hardening Off Critical Step for Success!

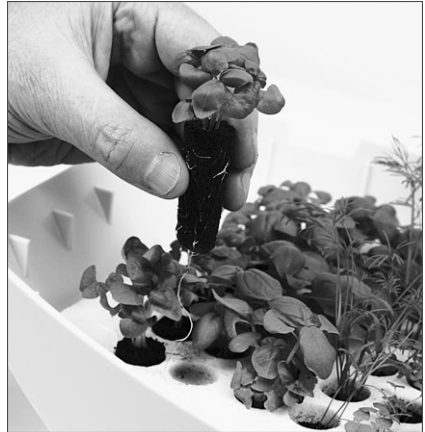
Before transplanting, seedlings need to be hardened off. Skipping this step will almost certainly result in some or all of your plants dying! Hardening off seedlings eases their transition from the AeroGarden to the outdoors, where they will be exposed to full sunlight, temperature variations and wind.

1. Remove Bowl (with Tray and seedlings) from Base and place in a shady location outside for a few hours each day, gradually increasing to 24 hours outside. This should take about a week. Too much direct sun will kill your starter seedlings.
2. Bring Bowl inside if weather turns bad or temperature is below 45°F (7.2°C).
3. Return Bowl to Base and replug AeroGarden when you bring Bowl inside.
4. If your seedlings get too large before weather will allow transplanting outdoors, transplant into small pots with high quality potting soil. Keep fully watered in a sunny space until weather permits transplanting outdoors.

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Transplanting

- Don't let sprouts get too big. Transplant 4–6" plants after hardening off or transplant into small pots with dirt until weather is agreeable.
- Lift Tray from Bowl. With finger or pencil, gently push up on Grow Sponge bottom. Take care not to damage too many roots.
- Remove from Tray by holding the Grow Sponge, not the plant.
- Plant Grow Sponge in soil. Note Seed Packet instructions for proper spacing and planting conditions.
- Pour one or two cups water on soil.
- Water plants well for first two weeks.



Push seedlings out of the tray from the bottom using a pencil or your finger. Pulling on the seedlings from the top can cause damage to young plants.

TRANSPLANTING TIPS

- Your transplanted seedlings need water every day for the first two weeks, especially in dry, sunny climates.
- It is best to plant your seedlings on a cool, cloudy day.
- For larger, warmer-weather veggies (i.e., tomatoes, peppers, and zucchini), some gardeners like to transplant from the AeroGarden into small pots before transplanting into an outdoor garden.

Starting Again

Clean Tray before reusing:

- Rinse Seed Starter Tray in water to remove plant or Grow Sponge debris. A small scrub brush or old toothbrush is helpful for this task.

Sanitize Seed Starter Tray:

- Fill a sink or 5 gallon bucket with water.
- Add ¼ cup (.06 liter) chlorine bleach per 5 gallons (3.78 liters) of water or 5 cups each of distilled white vinegar and tap water.
- Submerge Tray in solution for 2 minutes.
- Rinse Tray under cold running water for about 2 minutes.
- Grow Sponge and Nutrient replacements are available at www.AeroGarden.com

Seed Starter Log

Use a Seed Starter Log to record your Seeding Plan.

Space-Saver 6 AeroGarden models

The diagram shows a large, irregularly shaped container representing the AeroGarden. Inside, there are 36 numbered circular seed starter locations arranged in a grid. The locations are numbered 1 through 36. The numbers are arranged as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
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There is also one rectangular seed starter location located between positions 20 and 25.

