



BUFCO DIY GARLIC PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

Congratulations on the purchase of your Do It Yourself Garlic Planting Kit!

Garlic is one of the easiest edible plants you can grow. It is planted in mid fall (middle to end of October), and produces two harvests the following season. The first harvest, around the end of June, is for garlic scapes, the delicious flower stalks of the plants. The second harvest is in late July, when fully developed bulbs are pulled out. For more information, check out our blog: <https://blog.bufco.ca/2019/08/15/grow-your-own-garlic/>

WHAT'S IN THE BAG:

- 3 x **organic garlic bulbs** of the Music variety; each bulb will have at least four cloves.
- 1 x 5L bag of **organic vermicompost** (worm castings); one of the best soil amendments available. This will feed your garlic throughout the growing season.
- 1 x bundle of **organic straw** to use as mulch over your planted garlic.
- 1 x piece of **bird netting** to help keep critters from digging in your garlic patch.
- 6 x **garden staples** to hold the straw and bird netting in place.

PLANTING YOUR GARLIC:

1. Choose a well-exposed space that receives a minimum of four hours of sun, and where the soil drains well. You'll need about two square feet for one DIY Garlic Planting Kit.
2. Gently loosen the soil if it's compacted.
3. Add the 5 litre bag of organic vermicompost (worm castings) and work into the soil to a depth of about four inches.
4. Break apart the garlic bulbs into individual cloves, being careful not to remove the papery skin from the cloves. If the last layer of skin is removed, the flesh of the clove will be exposed and it may rot underground. However, you can still use it to eat.
5. Place cloves of garlic, five per square foot, in a planting grid similar to the layout of the "five" on a standard dice. The cloves should be evenly spaced and not too close to the edges of the planting area.
6. Holding a clove with pointy side up (root side down), gently push the clove into the loosened soil to a depth equal to two to four times the height of the clove (about two to four inches below the surface of the soil).
7. After you have planted all your garlic, back-fill each hole by gently brushing your hand across the surface of the soil.
8. Water so the soil is moist but not sopping wet.
9. Cover the planted area with straw. Loosen and spread the straw evenly over top the planting area.
10. Lay the included piece of bird netting overtop the straw, and secure with the included garden staples, being careful not to poke the planted cloves.

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NOTE: BE SURE TO REMOVE THE NETTING IN THE SPRING, when the plant is about eight to 10 inches tall, so the garlic greens can grow freely, and the netting doesn't choke the plant as it grows.

Moving forward, you'll only need to water occasionally, a deep soaking about once a week.

HARVESTING GARLIC SCAPES:

Garlic scapes are the edible flower stalk of the garlic plant. If left un-harvested, it would produce a cluster of flowers, which, after being pollinated, would then produce seeds that look like tiny garlic cloves. (These too are edible) By harvesting the scape before it flowers and goes to seed, the plant will force energy into the clove and in 4 to 5 weeks, will develop a multi-cloved bulb.

The garlic scape harvest takes place around the end of June (in Toronto – zones 5-6) Harvest the scape when it has curled around at least once, and before the flower has started to open. To harvest, simply snap or cut off the stalk at its base, just above the top set of leaves. **DO NOT** cut at the base of the plant at the soil.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR GARLIC SCAPES:

Garlic scapes taste just like garlic cloves, only a little less intense. Use garlic scapes exactly as you would garlic cloves. Dice or mince it in a stir fry, or add it in chunks to soups and sauces. It can also be processed for later use: Dice or mince the scapes and mix with just enough olive oil to moisten all of the scapes. It can be stored in the fridge for about a week before it will start to turn. For longer term storage, put the mixture into a freezer bag, flatten, and freeze. When you want to use it, just snap off a frozen piece and add it to your cooking. Scapes also make a wonderful pesto.

If you have access to a dehydrator, dry the scapes and then process them in a coffee grinder until they have turned to a fine powder. Voila – garlic scape powder!

Scapes are also wonderful grilled pickled – check online for loads of great pickling recipes.

Try this: On the BBQ, grill one side of a steak. When ready to flip, layer two or three scapes on the grill, and then flip the steak on top of the scapes. Finish grilling the steak and lift it, with the scapes underneath, off the grill and serve.

HARVESTING GARLIC BULBS:

Garlic is ready for harvest around the end of July. Bulbs are ready for harvest when the plant's leaves have significantly, but not entirely, died off (turned brown and dry). To harvest garlic, gently loosen the soil around the bulb with a gardening fork (hand-held pitch fork), being careful not to poke the bulb as it will bruise easily. Grasp the stalk down low, near the soil. Lift out the bulb and gently brush excess soil off the bulb. Some surface soil should be left on the bulb, as it will actually help to protect the bulb as you dry it over the following weeks. Yanking the bulbs out without loosening the soil can also lead to bruising. Leave about 12 inches of the stalk attached to the bulb for easier handling – cut off the rest of the stalks and leaves, and put it in your composter or bag it for the City compost pick up.

Be gentle with the bulbs. Even softly knocking them against each other can bruise them, especially before they are dried.

Garlic can be used immediately, when it's still "wet". However, the majority of your garlic will need to be cured, or dried, so it can be stored. Lay it out on a drying rack (generally used for baking) or hang the bulbs using string tied around the neck. For best results, cure the bulbs in a cool, dry, dark, space with good air circulation. The garlic can also be store in a cool, dry, and dark space.

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WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR GARLIC:

Dried garlic can be kept for months before it starts to lose its flavour and density. It can also be processed so it will last even longer.

Similar to the garlic scapes, cloves can be minced, mixed with olive oil, and frozen in thin, flat sheets for later use. It can also be frozen in ice cube trays as little cubes. Once frozen, pop the individual cubes into a zip lock bag and store in the freezer.

You can keep a small jar (the little mason jars work great) of minced garlic and olive oil in the fridge – great for immediate use, but it will start to turn within a couple weeks.

If you end up with any really awesome bulbs, with nice big cloves, you can dry and save them as seed garlic to plant come late October. By keeping the biggest and best bulbs/cloves for planting, you are propagating those with the best and strongest genes.

Roasting full bulbs of garlic is a delicious and easy way to use up relatively large amounts of garlic all at once, and it couldn't be easier. Choose your bulb and carefully remove all paper layers except those around the individual cloves. Do NOT break apart the bulb. With a sharp knife, remove the top of the bulb – about ¼ to ½". Place the bulb cut side up on a cookie sheet (or in a muffin tin) or on the BBQ grill. Brush with olive oil. Cover with tin foil and bake/roast at 205°C (or 400 F) for 30-35 minutes, or until soft. If cooking on the Q, use indirect heat (the burner directly under the food is off; other burners are on to reach a constant temperature of 205° Celsius or 400° Fahrenheit). Let cool for a few minutes and serve by:

- scooping out cloves with a knife and spreading on your favourite bread or cracker;
- add to mashed potatoes
- add to sauces and soups
- add to butter for a super creamy garlic butter
- mix with parmesan cheese and olive oil for a delicate pasta topping.
- Mix with breadcrumbs or Panko, grated parmesan cheese, and chopped oregano, pile high on halved tomatoes, and roast or bake until tops are golden brown and the tomato is bubbling hot.

Easy peeling techniques include:

- Place your garlic cloves in a small metal mixing bowl. Place another mixing bowl upside down overtop the first mixing bowl. Shake vigorously (this can be loud!) Voila – peeled garlic!
- Have a bowl of ice water standing by. Boil a pot of water and drop cloves in for no more than 10 seconds. Immediately plunge the cloves into ice water until all heat is removed. (This process is called “blanching”, and will not cook the garlic). The paper should peel away very easily. Use a colander with a handle to move the garlic in and out of the boiling water, and into cold water.
- Remove the bottom of a garlic clove and place it on a cutting board. Rest the flat side of a broad knife, spatula, or other flat metal utensil on top of the clove. Sharply smack the top, flat side of the utensil with your hand (if using a knife, wear an oven mitt to avoid cutting yourself). Don't hit it so hard that you pulverize the garlic, but rather just hard enough to crack it in a few places. The skin should separate for easy removal.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR GARLIC PLANTING KIT!

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