Microgreens are nutritious healthy ‘fast food’ grown quickly from seeds in good light with adequate moisture. Seeds are sown in a soil medium or seed raising mix and are ready to eat in 1-3 weeks. These baby greens are harvested before they become full size plants. They only require minimal cost, time & effort to grow. They are the perfect solution for health conscious urbanites with minimal time and space! They can even be grown indoors on a well lit bench with no need for a garden & harvested just before serving.

Materials You Need:

- A container with drainage holes (e.g. a repurposed plastic punnet with lid – a no cost mini greenhouse to raise your seeds);
- Certified organic or fungicide free seeds [click for a list of suppliers in your location];
- Spray bottle with water;
- Seaweed solution (such as Eco-Seaweed);
- Potting mix/growing medium & nutrients [click for an easy DIY recipe to make or buy a seed raising mix];
- Plant label optional [click for creative DIY options] or get the kids involved.

Instructions:

**STEP 1.** To help your seeds germinate quickly, pre-soak larger seeds (e.g. mung beans, wheat, peas) in warm water for a few hours or overnight. No need to soak small seeds!

**STEP 2.** Open your punnet lid or if using a seed raising tray with holes in the bottom like the one on the left, lay some moistened paper towel or chux cloth down over the holes to stop the mix falling through. Fill your container about 3/4 full of moist growing medium about 2-3cm deep. I use my home made potting mix because it is an ideal texture and contains organic minerals which help provide additional nutrition to grow healthy green leaves.

For the full tutorial, health benefits, seeds & more tips visit: [http://themicrogardener.com/easy-guide-to-growing-microgreens](http://themicrogardener.com/easy-guide-to-growing-microgreens)

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STEP 2. (Cont’d)

You can buy seed raising mix if you don’t want to make your own but for maximum health benefits, sprinkle in some rock minerals. You could also use a sieved certified organic potting mix (look for a suitable logo) and add up to 25% worm castings as a source of nitrogen (if you have this available) or pre-soaked coir peat, vermiculite or coarse washed sand.

**Spread the mix out evenly** and gently firm down with a paddlepop stick or back of a spoon.

STEP 3. Generously sprinkle your seeds over the mix and press in lightly. Then evenly spread a thin layer of seed raising mix (about 0.5 cm) over the top so they are all just covered.

Lightly water by **misting with a spray bottle** to avoid dislodging the seeds. Place on a drainage tray or saucer in a warm spot like your kitchen bench. Water daily but **check soil moisture first** by touching with your fingers – the seeds should never dry out!

To create a warm humid environment for germination, cover with the punnet lid or add a clear plastic bag over the top of the tray with holes snipped in the top for airflow.

STEP 4. Once germinated, the seeds have used up their internal store of food to grow so at this point. Add seaweed to your spray bottle and **mist with seaweed solution** to feed the plants with trace elements. This **improves flavour and boosts nutrition**.

Once the seeds germinate, you can move them to a sheltered sunny position like a windowsill or greenhouse.

When the seedlings are 2.5-10cm tall - depending on the variety you choose, your yummy microgreens are ready for harvesting!

**THE FUN BIT!**

**Use scissors to cut stems just above the soil** when you’re just about to put them on the plate, into a juice or smoothie for maximum health benefits.
Tips for Growing Gorgeous Greens

- If sowing radish or beetroot seeds, you can **use a deeper mix** so if you decide to harvest some as microgreens and leave the others to mature, you’ll quickly have root crops to enjoy.

- If you don’t get to eat all your microgreens or want to start seedlings to grow in pots or outdoors, **transplant a few microgreens** from your container by gently levering the seedlings out with a skewer or fork and gently holding the leaves only NOT the stems or roots. Settle the baby seedlings into a pot with some liquid seaweed to prevent transplant shock and acclimatize them gradually to the sun over a few days as they venture into the big wide world. Then let them grow into mature salad greens and vegetables so you can enjoy the flavour for longer.

- ‘**Sow little and often**’ - regularly sowing seeds in punnets every week or two will provide a continuous supply of tasty nutritious food. Saving some for your container garden will also enable you to expand your skills to grow outdoors as well with a sufficient supply you can manage and consume.

- When your microgreens have all been harvested, **reuse your potting mix** in your compost or another pot. As the plants have been grown so quickly the soil will still be full of nutrients to help raise another crop.

Delicious Recipe Ideas to inspire you!

- Garnish meals with microgreens - they are a tasty accompaniment to eggs, soups, main meals and great in juices/smoothies. **Poached Eggs, Mushrooms & Microgreens**

- **Quinoa Spring Rolls**

- **Microgreens Salad with Garlic Mustard Vinaigrette** from Cranking Kitchen

Harvesting: For all you frustrated would-be hairdressers out there, it gives you an opportunity to practice your scissor skills snipping shoots! If you grow a small quantity in a punnet container, you can pop in your fridge when they are ready to harvest to keep them fresh & crisp for a few days. Then give them a haircut as you need to!

Microgreens contain vitamins, minerals & phytonutrients that provide nutritional health benefits and are packed with flavour, colour, texture and living enzymes that aid digestion.

For the full tutorial, health benefits, seeds & more tips visit: [http://themicrogardener.com/easy-guide-to-growing-microgreens](http://themicrogardener.com/easy-guide-to-growing-microgreens)

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