

## How to Grow Thyme

### General

Thyme, like other woody-stemmed herbs, tends to grow very slowly, and benefits from an early start if grown from seed. Unlike basil and other annual herbs, you shouldn't count on harvesting thyme in the first (or even the second) year, except for very light picking of leaves.

### Latin

English or Common Thyme: *Thymus vulgaris* & Creeping Thyme: *T. serpyllum*

Family: Lamiaceae

### Difficulty

Challenging and slow going

### Season & Zone

**Season:** spring through fall

**Exposure:** full sun

**Zone:** hardy to Zone 4

### Timing

Sow indoors late February to mid-April. Transplant out late April through May once soil begins to warm or direct sow late May through June. Ideal soil temperature for germination: 15-21°C (60-70°F).

### Starting

Sow the dust-like seeds on the surface of dampened, sterilized seed starting mix under bright light with bottom heat. Keep watering to a minimum, as thyme seedlings are prone to damping off.

When seedlings are large enough, harden them off and transplant to the garden or to containers spacing them at 23-38cm (9-15") apart.

### Growing

Trim plants back after flowering to encourage bushy growth. Protect container-grown plants from cold as winter approaches, and water only as necessary. Damp, cold soil will kill thyme.

### Harvest

Fresh thyme leaves can be harvested at any time of the year as long as the plants are established. Prune back any dead branches. Whole stems/branches can be clipped and dried whole or individual leaves can be left to dry in a dark, airy spot for long term storage.

### Companion Planting

An all around beneficial plant for the garden, thyme is particularly worth planting near Brassicas, as it repels cabbage moths, and strawberries, as it enhances flavour.



Thyme

