STORING
• Store seeds in an airtight jar in the refrigerator until you are ready to sow.

SOWING
*Germination codes 1, 3, and 4*
*Many species on our list germinate in 15 to 45 days*
• Sow as early as March or April, or anytime during the growing season, in plastic pots filled with a commercial seed-starting mix.
• Place pot of sown seeds in a well-ventilated, warm spot with bright, indirect light.
• Protect pot from rain.

WATERING
*Always water seeds by this method!*
• Place entire pot in a shallow tray of water. When the soil mix surface is moist, remove pot from water and allow it to drain.
• Check pots daily to see if they need watering. They should not dry out or be kept soggy.
• Monitor seeds regularly; this early stage is important to survival.

TRANSPLANTING
• Transplant seedlings into separate pots when they are large enough to handle (usually after two or three pairs of true leaves emerge).
• Plant seedlings in their permanent garden locations after roots are established but before they are potbound.

FERTILIZING
• For more vigorous seedlings, fertilize with routine applications of an organic, water-soluble fertilizer such as fish emulsion at 1/4 to 1/3 the recommended strength during the active growing season.

STRATIFYING
*Germination codes 2 and 6*
Some seeds from temperate regions must be stratified—that is, exposed to the equivalent of winter conditions through a moist, cold period that provides the required pre-germination treatment. Many stratified seeds germinate in about 30 days. Here’s how it works:

• Sow seeds in a plastic pot on slightly moist commercial seed-starting mix.
• Place pot in a sealed plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for 6 to 12 weeks. Time refrigeration period so pots can be removed during the growing season.
• Take pots out of refrigerator, remove plastic bag, water as described above, and place them in a warm, bright spot. Alternatively, you may sow any seeds needing stratification in a pot in late fall or winter and leave the pot outside. These are the very conditions that we seek to recreate in the refrigerator!

In a pinch it is good to remember that many seeds will germinate at a low percentage even if you ignore each and every one of the rules (except the one about keeping them moist). Best of luck!

GERMINATION CODES

1 - No pre-treatment necessary
2 - Stratification required
3 - Soak seeds 8 hours in warm water before sowing
4 - Do not cover these very fine seeds when sowing
5 - Sow seeds directly in garden
6 - Seeds require 1 to 3 months of warm stratification followed by 1 to 3 months of cold stratification
7 - Sow uncovered on moist milled sphagnum, wrap pot in saran wrap and place in bright light
SEED GERMINATION & PERENNIAL GARDENING REFERENCES

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