

How to grow American lemon tree

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When life gives you lemons, make lemonade — but when life doesn't give you lemons? Make your own (with a little soil, some gardening, and about 15 years of patience!). **Growing a lemon tree** isn't easy, but with enough patience, you'll have a beautiful, healthy, and delicious fruit tree.

How to grow lemon trees from seeds

Get seeds from lemon

Choose a bright yellow lemon that is free of bruises and blemishes to remove the seeds. Peel the lemon like you would an orange, or carefully cut the lemon in half without breaking the seeds with a knife. Rinse the seeds and set aside to dry completely.

Sow the seeds

Once dry, plant the seeds in seedling trays or small pots about 1cm deep into the soil. The containers should drain well and the soil should be kept moist.

Proper plant care

Grow the plant in suitable conditions, including plenty of sunlight, warm temperatures and moist air.

Move the plant to a larger area

As the tree gets bigger, you can move it outside or into a larger pot. Experienced growers suggest using a well-drained pot, about half the size of a 60ml bucket. If planting your lemon tree in a large pot, make sure the bottom of the pot has holes and the soil drains well enough so that water does not pool in the pot."

Note: You can always start your lemon tree from a seedling instead of a seed. This will significantly shorten the waiting time until your lemon tree appears. Choose healthy leaves and roots.



How to care for lemon trees

Sunlight

Lemon trees need at least six hours of sunlight a day, but they can grow even better with more. " *Lemon trees like light—the more the better. Twelve to 14 hours a day is best during the growing season,* " says Marvin Pritts, professor and director of the Undergraduate Research Program in Plant Sciences at Cornell University's School of Integrative Plant Sciences.

You can also use grow lights for indoor plants to help on cloudy days.

Water

If the plant is in a small pot, you should only water it every two to three days. For a large outdoor pot, water it once a week, in the ground during the growing season. Lemon trees do not usually need daily watering because they are not water-loving plants. The goal is to keep the soil moist, but not soggy. Allow the soil to dry out completely before watering, as too much water can cause the roots to rot.

You should stick your finger into the soil up to the knuckle to see if it is evenly moist or starting to dry out. If it is dry, it is time to water. Potted plants can dry out more quickly, so you may need to water them more often than outdoor lemon trees.

Land

Soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5 is suitable for growing lemon trees.

Pruning

You should prune the branches to prevent them from overlapping as this can hinder proper air flow and disrupt growth. Pruning can also be used for aesthetic purposes.



Pollination

Hand pollination is important if you are growing plants indoors. When the plant flowers, use a paintbrush to move the pollen around the flower — mimicking a bee — to get the fruit. You can also gently shake the flower to spread the pollen throughout the pot.

Fertilizer

During the growing season, from spring to fall, fertilize your lemon tree with a balanced fertilizer or a ready-made citrus fertilizer mix. Be sure to follow the package directions for how much fertilizer to apply and how often to apply it. Experts say you should typically fertilize about three times a year. This will ensure that your tree has enough nutrients to grow and produce lemons.

You should mix a slow-release fertilizer into the soil. Spring and summer are the best times to fertilize. Also, the frequency of fertilizing will depend on the type of lemon tree and the type of fertilizer you use.

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