

Growing in Containers

Practical skills

What changes in a pot, and the three things that go wrong.

A pot is a small, isolated environment with no buffer.

Essentials

Drainage holes — always

Peat-free multipurpose compost

Bigger pots dry out more slowly

Feed from about six weeks after potting

Good in pots

Herbs

Salad leaves

Tomatoes, in a large pot

Chillies

Dwarf fruit trees

Potatoes in a sack

Common problems

Drying out — check daily in summer

Nutrients exhausted — compost feeds ~6 weeks

Root-bound — pot up a size each year

Crocks over drainage holes are unnecessary and can impede drainage. A layer of gravel in the base makes drainage worse, not better.