

## QUICK REFERENCE PLANTING GUIDE

LIGHT/SUN EXPOSURE	Full to part sun.
USDA HARDINESS ZONES	Not winter hardy. Will thrive from spring to fall in all zones.
PLANT TYPE	Annual.
PLANTING DISTANCE IN-GROUND	At least 5 feet apart.
CONTAINER SIZE	One plant per 12-inch or larger container.
MATURE HEIGHT/SPREAD	3 to 5 feet tall with a 2 to 3 foot spread..
BLOOM TIME	Early summer to frost.

## VARIETAL INFORMATION

Determinate tomato plants bear a crop of fruit that can typically be harvested in two to five pickings.

Indeterminate tomato plants bear fruit throughout the growing season with fruit ripening until the first frost.

Days to maturity indicates the average number of days from transplanting until the first fruit is ready to harvest.

Early season - 55 to 65 days

Mid-season - 65 to 80 days

Late season - 80+ days

Compact Bicolor: Indeterminate. Mid-season.

Compact Home Slice: Determinate. Early season.

Compact Purple: Determinate. Late season.

Compact Yellow: Determinate. Late season.



Thank you for your order.

Your satisfaction is of primary concern to us. Please use the following resources for questions regarding your order:

- [cottagefarmsdirect.com](http://cottagefarmsdirect.com)
- [help@cottagefarmsdirect.com](mailto:help@cottagefarmsdirect.com)
- [facebook.com/cottagefarmsdirect](https://facebook.com/cottagefarmsdirect)
- [@cottagefarms](https://twitter.com/cottagefarms)
- [pinterest.com/cottagefarms](https://pinterest.com/cottagefarms)
- [@cottagefarmsdirect](https://instagram.com/cottagefarmsdirect)
- 888-593-3644
- 9960 Padgett Switch Rd.  
Irvington, Alabama 36544

### Cottage Farms' Guarantee

We aren't happy if you aren't happy. Cottage Farms warrants its perennials for one year and annuals for 90 days from the time of the shipment. If for any reason you are dissatisfied, Cottage Farms will replace your plant with a similar or comparable one at no charge. If your replacement is not available or it is too late in the season to ship, it will ship the following shipping season.

**Caution: Do not assume any plant is safe to eat. Only parts of plants expressly grown to be eaten should be considered edible. As with any product that is not food, care should be taken to make sure that small children and pets do not ingest any part of a plant that is not expressly grown to be eaten.**

Unless specifically stated, this product is intended for ornamental horticultural use only and is not intended for consumption or ingestion by humans or pets. Most plants are harmless but some contain toxic substances which can cause adverse health effects. Furthermore, some individuals and some animals are sensitive or allergic to certain plants and precautions should be taken to limit or avoid physical contact with particular plants. Some plants have thorns or spines that can be painful if handled.

**In case of ingestion, contact a poison control center immediately.  
1-800-222-1222**

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Tomatoes

\*Image on cover is representative of the type of plant(s) in this offer and not necessarily indicative of actual size or color for the included variety.

## OUT OF THE BOX

### TOMATOES

Your plants have been shipped to you in pots. Please remove the plants from the packaging right away and plant them as soon as possible following the planting instructions below. If it is not possible to plant them right away, follow these important steps:

1. Roll the plastic down around each plant and place them in a sunny location.
2. Keep the plants well watered.

Note: Some leaves may appear wilted or yellow upon arrival. This is due to the stress of shipping and is nothing to worry about. Water the plant and let it recover in a shady location for a few days, then gently remove any foliage that does not recover to allow for new growth.



SHIPPED IN 2.5-INCH POTS.

PLANT SIZE MAY VARY BASED ON GROWING CONDITIONS.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Why are the bottoms of my tomatoes rotting?**

This condition, known as blossom-end rot, can be caused by a calcium deficiency in the soil or a moisture shortage while fruit is forming. To prevent blossom-end rot, feed your plants regularly with a well-balanced fertilizer, maintain a regular watering schedule and consider having your soil tested to determine if it needs additional calcium.

**Why are the skins of my tomatoes cracking and splitting?**

Cracking can occur when soil moisture fluctuates as fruits are ripening. Maintain a regular watering schedule and use mulch under and around the plants to help preserve soil moisture. Fruits that have begun to crack are edible, but should be picked and used right away.

**Why are blooms falling off my plant before fruit develops?**

Flower drop occurs during periods of unusually high daytime or low nighttime temperatures. Commercial blossom set sprays can help, but the problem typically resolves itself as weather conditions improve.

## PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

**Important:** Thoroughly hydrate the plant by watering well before planting.

1. Remove the clear plastic bag from around the pot.
2. After watering, remove the pot by holding the plant upside down in one hand and squeezing the sides of the pot with the other.
3. Prepare the root ball for planting by gently disturbing the surface roots with your fingers, fork or gardening tool and pruning any damaged roots. This will encourage the roots to begin growing outward into the new soil.
4. Dig a hole at least twice as deep and twice as wide as the plant's root ball. Tomatoes are a rare exception where planting deeply is actually beneficial. Plant each tomato so that only 3-5 inches of the stem is above the soil line. Tall tomato plants can be planted on their side in a trench with the tops bent upward. Refill the hole or trench with soil, firming the soil around the plant with your fingers.
5. Water thoroughly.

## CONTINUING CARE

Adequate and consistent watering is essential for your tomatoes. Inconsistent watering or soils that do not hold water evenly can cause problems with fruit development.

Due to variable geographical and environmental conditions, a specific watering schedule is difficult to define. However, as a rule of thumb, you should not allow the soil or the original root ball to completely dry out. You may need to water as often as every day in periods of drought and extreme summer heat.

Over-watering can be as damaging as under-watering. Be sure that the area surrounding your plant has adequate drainage to move water away from the plant. If you choose to plant in a container, always select one with drainage holes to prevent your plant's roots from sitting in water.

Tomatoes are ready to be harvested once they have changed from green to red, yellow, pink or purple, depending on the variety. Store freshly picked tomatoes at room temperature out of direct sunlight. To preserve flavor and texture, avoid refrigerating fresh tomatoes. Do not consume any other part of the plant.

## CONTINUING CARE (Continued)

### STAKING & CAGING

Tomatoes can be supported by staking or by using tomato cages. To stake tomatoes, drive a wooden, plastic or metal stake into the ground 3-6 inches from the base of each plant at planting time. As the plants grow, attach them to the stake using plant ties, taking care to avoid damaging the stems. Selective pruning can help keep staked plants more manageable, but is not necessary for fruit production.

Alternately, place a tomato cage around each plant at planting time and press the legs into the ground. A small stake can be placed in the ground on each side of the cage to help keep it upright, particularly in windy areas. The plant will support itself on the cage as it grows and should need no pruning.

### MULCHING

Apply a 2-4 inch layer of shredded bark, compost, leaves, straw or other organic matter around your plants to promote moisture retention, maintain even soil temperatures and discourage weed growth. Replenish the mulch as needed.

### FEEDING

Feed your plants once every 2-3 weeks during the growing season with a water-soluble fertilizer for fruits and vegetables.

### WINTERIZING

Tomatoes are tender annuals that cannot tolerate any frost or freezing temperatures. In the event of a late spring frost, protect young plants by covering them overnight with a sheet, frost blanket or an inverted bucket or box. Remove any material used to cover the plants the following morning. Tomato plants should be discarded when they have finished fruiting at the end of the season.

## SOIL PREPARATION

We recommend having your soil tested periodically by your local County Extension Office ([www.nifa.usda.gov/extension](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/extension) or by calling 1-800-333-4636). A soil test can determine if your soil needs any amendments to enhance the growth and performance of your plants.

Ideal garden soil is easy to dig in and drains well while still holding the nutrients and water vital to plant growth. To prepare a bed for in-ground planting, spade or till the soil to a depth of roughly 12-18 inches. Next, spread a 2-4 inch layer of organic matter such as compost, shredded leaves or peat moss over the soil and mix well.