

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Cosmos

Cosmos are often seen in wildflower mixes, and they have bright colors that make good borders or as cut flowers. Cosmos have many different varieties which reach different heights and have an assortment of colors. Cosmos can appear in single or double blooms and are easy to care for. The flowers can reach up to 4 feet high but other varieties only reach 1 foot high. Cosmos are a member of the aster family and have daisy-like flowers. The flowers will attract butterflies to the garden.

To plant:

Cosmos grow best in soil that has not been amended, so do not amend the soil prior to planting. The flowers are usually grown from seed, and they are typically directly sown into the outdoor garden. Scatter the seeds around the planting area and cover lightly with soil, no more than 1/4 inch. Space the seeds 12 to 18 inches apart. When deciding where to plant Cosmos, be sure to plant taller varieties in the back of the garden bed so they don't shade other Cosmos or flowers growing there. Dwarf varieties should be planted as a border along garden beds. It will take up to seven weeks for Cosmos to bloom if planted from seed. To start early, plant the seeds indoors six weeks before the last frost with a seed-starting mix.

To grow:

If beginning indoors, transplant Cosmos outside once they are approximately 4 inches tall. Cosmos' best growing conditions are hot and dry. To care for the Cosmos, be sure to deadhead spent blooms. This encourages more blooms to occur lower on the plant, which will make a stronger plant. Also, if you



Picotee Cosmo seeds available at ufseeds.com

are growing a taller variety of Cosmos, you may need to stake the plant so it isn't damaged by wind or grow the flowers against a fence. Another option is to plant the flowers closer than 2 feet to one another, where they will protect each other from the wind instead of staking. Cosmos grow nicer, larger flowers if they are watered regularly. Although Cosmos come in both annual and perennial varieties, the plant reseeds itself. Cosmos do well when paired with cleome, dahlias and cannas.

To harvest:

Instead of deadheading, Cosmos can be cut to be displayed indoors and this has the same affect as deadheading would in encouraging more growth on the plant. Cosmos are good for cut flowers because of their long-lasting blooms and lengthy stems. If hoping to harvest seeds or that the Cosmos will self-sow, leave a few flowers on the plant so they can turn into seed pods and reseed themselves.



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What Cosmos crave:

Since Cosmos thrive on poor soil, do not add fertilizer to the plants. If Cosmos are planted in an area with amended soil, the flowers grown there will be weak and will not stand upright.

Where to buy Cosmo seeds:

Urban Farmer offers many different kinds of Cosmos in different colors in tall and dwarf mixes.

Check out our Cosmo seed selection on our website at ufseeds.com!



Sea Shells Mix Cosmo seeds available at ufseeds.com



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