



FROM THE FILES OF THE DIRT DIVA DIARIES

Container Gardening Size Guide

The Right Pot for Every Plant

Not sure what size container to use? Here's your quick reference guide! Use this to match veggies and herbs with the perfect pot size. Too small = stunted growth. Too big = overwatering problems. Get it just right!

🪴 SMALL CONTAINERS (6-8 INCHES)

Small Pots: Perfect for Compact Growers

POT SIZE

6-8 inches diameter

VOLUME

2-3 gallons

PERFECT FOR:

Lettuce, spinach, arugula, radishes, small herbs (basil, oregano, thyme), parsley, chives, small peppers (ornamental), microgreens

➤ **Soil tip:** Fill with quality potting mix. These dry out faster — check moisture daily!

🪴 MEDIUM CONTAINERS (10-12 INCHES)

Medium Pots: The Sweet Spot for Most Veggies

POT SIZE

10-12 inches diameter

VOLUME

5-7 gallons

PERFECT FOR:

Cherry tomatoes, bush beans, dwarf pepper plants, peas, eggplant, Swiss chard, kale, smaller cucumber varieties, dwarf zucchini

➤ **Pro tip:** This is the most versatile size. Great balance between water retention and root space!

🪴 LARGE CONTAINERS (14-18 INCHES)

Large Pots: For Heavy Feeders & Sprawlers

POT SIZE

14-18 inches diameter

VOLUME

10-15 gallons

PERFECT FOR:

Full-size tomato plants, full-size pepper plants, zucchini, summer squash, cucumbers, eggplant, melons (dwarf varieties), larger herb combinations

➤ **Drainage reminder:** These hold more water — make sure drainage holes are generous to prevent root rot!

* CONTAINER SELECTION TIPS

The Right Soil Makes All the Difference

Use Potting Mix, NOT Garden Soil

Garden soil is too heavy and drains poorly in containers. Use quality potting mix (or seed-starting mix for small pots).

Mix in Compost

Add 25-30% finished compost to your potting mix for nutrients and better water retention.

Add Perlite or Vermiculite

For extra drainage (especially with larger pots), mix in a handful of perlite. This prevents waterlogging.

Replenish Soil Annually

Container soil gets depleted. Replace the top 3-4 inches with fresh mix each season, or use a new container.

Drainage is CRITICAL — Don't Skip This!

- Drainage holes required:** At least 2-3 holes per pot (more for larger pots). They must be ¼-½ inch diameter.
- Elevate pots:** Use pot feet or place containers on gravel/grates so water can drain freely from the bottom.
- Test before planting:** Water the empty pot. Water should flow out immediately and freely. If it doesn't, drill more holes!
- Never use saucers that trap water:** If you use a saucer, empty it after watering or your roots will rot.

✦ Container Gardening Success Formula

- **Right pot size:** Too small = stress. Too big = overwatering. Match size to plant maturity.
- **Quality soil:** Potting mix, not garden soil. Add compost for nutrition and drainage.
- **Perfect drainage:** Holes in bottom, elevated pots, no trapped water. Root rot is a killer!
- **Consistent watering:** Containers dry out fast. Check soil daily, especially in hot weather.
- **Regular feeding:** Containers need fertilizer more often than ground gardens. Feed every 2-3 weeks during growing season.
- **Sunlight:** Most veggies need 6+ hours direct sun. Move pots around to maximize light if needed.