Quick Guide: 3 Simple Strategies to Grow Vegetables Indoors

Doesn't matter what time of year it is, you can ALWAYS grow some of your food right inside your own home! 😍🌱 Where to start though? And what are the easiest vegetables and herbs to grow indoors? You may feel intimidated the first time you try to figure this out on your own. It's totally normal...

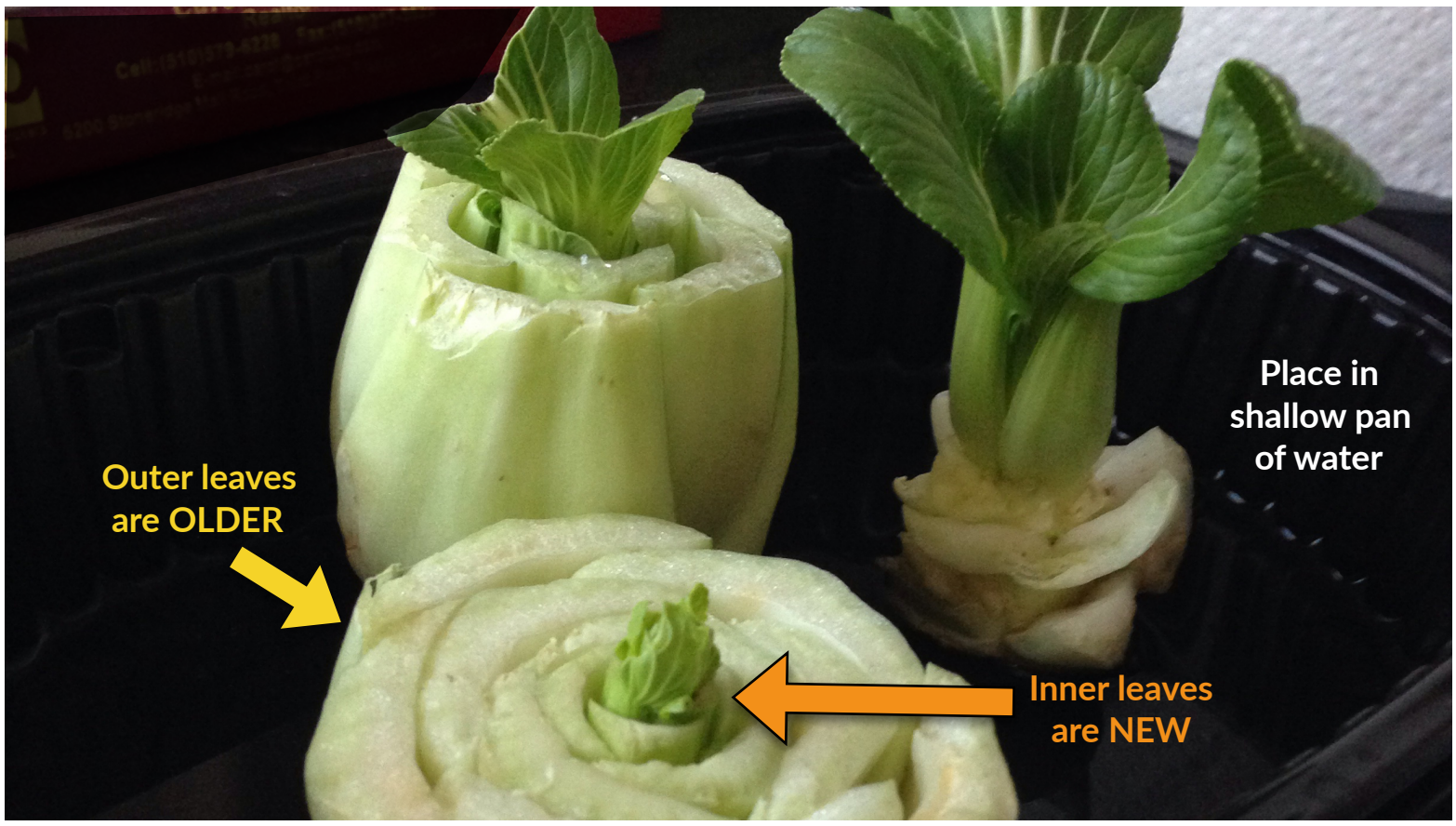
Here's 3 simple strategies to get you started. ***You got this*!** It's easier than you think and probably takes less time than you think, too! And when you're ready for more, pre-register to be the first to know about the next Indoor Garden class at GrowYourOwnVegetables.org/indoor-first ! 😊

Simple Strategy #1 - RE-GROW your groceries

Why this Strategy:
You can get started with the groceries you buy at the store right now! All the magic of gardening without any new tools. PLUS, seeing one small plant growing in your daily environment can have a massive impact over time. You'll be inspired to grow MORE, because this is a simple, GREEN lifestyle.

How it works:
For certain types of vegetables, you can cut them down to within 1" (2cm) of their base, place them in a shallow pan of water, and they will RE-GROW. Within 7 days, you will see more food appear. As long as you change the water every couple days, you will continue to see growth for weeks. Harvest each new leaf as it grows in or wait and harvest a whole bunch at once.

Which vegetables:
Beet tops, Cabbage, Carrot Tops, Celery, Fennel, Garlic chives, Leeks, Lettuce, Pac Choi, Scallions, Sweet Potato Greens



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Simple Strategy #2:
Modular Indoor Garden - Master one thing and scale!

Why this Strategy:
It's always easier to create one small module and then replicate it. When you focus on one thing, you can predict your results which helps you get what you really want. If you try to do too many different things all at the same time, you unnecessarily multiply the number of challenges you created for yourself. Instead, master a simple modular size, and scale it up or down as you need.

Three types of indoor systems:
Most indoor gardens are one of these three types - Shelf, Hanging and Free-Standing (vertical). For the purposes of keeping this quick guide simple, let's focus on the Shelf Systems. Often, they require the least amount of equipment and space to get started.

Modular Shelf Unit:

TRAY - Grab a re-usable tray from your local garden nursery. Any tray will work! Drainage holes in the bottom are helpful. Poke a couple drainage holes if needed. And then put something under the tray to collect excess water. I use a baking pan. If your tray is more like the image on the right, made with plastic mesh, simply place newspaper over the mesh to hold in your potting mix

POTTING MIX - You do NOT want soil, you want potting mix which is lighter weight. Look for Certified Organic with an OMRI or CDFA badge on it. One cubic foot of potting mix will fill 5-10 trays if you are growing greens and herbs in 1-2" deep mix. Or one cubic foot of potting mix will fill 2 trays if you are growing fruiting vegetables in 6" deep mix.

LIGHT - You need a light if you growing plants bigger than shoots (bigger than the image on the right below). A four-foot full spectrum fluorescent lamp fits 2-3 trays depending on your tray size. Shorter two-foot lamps are great for one single tray like the image below left. If you decide to try LED lights, blue spectrum works for greens, but you will need blue and red spectrum light if you want to grow fruiting crops like tomatoes or peppers.

SEEDS - Choose vegetables and varieties good for indoor growing (see next page).

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Simple Strategy #3:
Easy vegetable varieties for indoor gardens

Why this Strategy:
Make your life easy and work WITH nature. Every plant has different needs. And while it might be fun to try to grow something challenging indoors (like bananas)... if you want easy and fast, stick with these known vegetables and varieties that have worked for thousands of other people in their indoor gardens. Why work harder than you have to? 😉

Greens
Spinach
Lettuce
Arugula
Pac Choi
Baby Kale
Baby Collards
Mustard Greens
Pea Shoots
Sunflower Shoots
Chicory
Endive
Orach

NOTE: There are TONS of mustard greens like Mizuna, Amara, Shungiko, etc

Microgreens
Radish
Broccoli
Kale
Kohlrabi
Amaranth
Chard
Dill
Cilantro
Fennel
Scallion
Mustards
Celery
Sorrel
Shiso
Orach
Basil

Tomato Varieties
Matt's Wild Cherry
Toy Boy
Tiny Tim
Small Fry
Patio Hybrid

Pepper Varieties
Jupiter
Italico
Mohawk
Cheyenne
Super Chili (hot)
Hot Purira (hot)

Herbs in Trays
Basil

Herbs in Pots
Sage
Rosemary
Thyme
Oregano
Mint
Parsley
Basil

Grow these herbs in separate containers because they have different water needs or take longer to grow or have roots that spread fast

Cucumber Varieties
Little Leaf
Patio Pickler
Bush Whopper
Bush Champion
Socrates
Tyria

Squash Varieties
Gold Rush
Peter Pan
Sunburst

NOTE: Cucumber & Squash plants are BIGGER... more experience recommended

Pea Varieties
Dwarf White Sugar
Sugar Ann Snap
Blue Bantam Dwarf
Field Pea for SHOOTS!

Bush Beans Varieties
Provider
Blue Lake
(NOTE: not very space & time effective to grow beans indoors)

NEXT STEPS: Claim your spot in the next Indoor Gardening class. Pre-register here to be the first to know:
GrowYourOwnVegetables.org/indoor-first

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