

# Kiwi fruit

GWF453  
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The kiwi is slow to start off from seed, but easy to grow once you have got it going.

Kiwi-fruit plants are large climbing plants that can be grown outdoors or kept as a house plant. They have large, hairy, heart-shaped leaves, and small, white flowers and fruits in the autumn. Kiwis are simple plants to raise from seed and are easy to look after. They also produce fruit quite happily.

## How to grow a kiwi plant

In every kiwi fruit there are thousands of tiny brown seeds, which you would normally eat. To get the seeds out, cut open the fruit and scoop out some of the flesh. Use the spoon to carefully separate the brown seeds from the green flesh; put the seeds in an egg cup.

You will need to wash the seeds, so pour some lukewarm water into the eggcup containing the seeds, and swish it around with your finger. After a few minutes, pour the water away, taking care not to throw the seeds away as well. Scrape the washed seeds from the egg cup on to a piece of clean tissue paper and let the seeds dry off.

You will need a pot measuring about 8cm across, with holes in the bottom to let water drain out. Fill your pot with multi-purpose compost and water it very well. Sow the seeds thinly

on the surface and cover them lightly with a bit more compost. Put the pot in a clear plastic bag and tie the ends up. This is to keep all the moisture in and stop the seeds from drying out. Put the pot on a sunny windowsill and wait.

The seeds will grow in a few weeks, but will need checking every day. If the compost looks dry, give it a little water. When the seeds have started sprouting, remove the plastic bag and put the pot back on a sunny windowsill. As the seedlings grow, they will need to be potted up in separate pots of compost. Let them grow some more, and repot them again when you see roots coming out of the holes in the bottom of the pot.

## Caring for your kiwi plant

Kiwi plants grow quite large and only make good house plants for about two years, before they get too big. To grow them indoors, you need a large pot, about 35cm across. They will be happy in a sunny room or conservatory. They will also need something to climb up. The best way to do this in a pot is to make a wigwam with 2m-long canes which

you push into the compost before planting the kiwi plant.

If you decide to put the plants in the garden, they need a sunny wall to climb up. Plant them either in a big pot or in the ground. To make your plants produce fruit you need a male and female plant. You will not know whether the plants are male or female until they flower, so grow several plants in order to be surer of getting one of each sex. For indoor plants, water them regularly and feed them twice a week in the summer, using a general houseplant feed.

You will need to train and tie your kiwi plants up their support until they become properly established.

