

GROWING GUIDE FOR GOURDS

Binomial Name:	Cucurbitaceae
Varieties:	Luffa
Start:	Seed or seedling
Germination:	3 - 10 days, 16°C to 32°C
Seed Life (viability):	3 - 5 years
Soil:	Well drained, fertile
Sunlight:	Full sun
Sow Seeds:	5mm - 1cm deep, 15cm apart in rows 120cm apart
Transplant/Thin to:	30 - 45cm apart
Ave. Days to Harvest:	75 - 120
Good Companions:	
Bad Companions:	

Some speculate that gourds may be the oldest plant domesticated by humans. Used for millennia as bowls, bottles, bird feeders and carved sculptures, as well as (in the case of the luffa / loofah / loufa) a body scrubbing sponge. They are also used the world over as resonating chambers of percussion and stringed instruments. Leave them on the vine until fully mature and their skin is dry.

Sowing & Growing:

Grown just like squash, gourds are frost sensitive plants with tropical origins that require a long hot season and full sun. Can be direct seeded in warm regions. In colder climate regions, plant seeds in containers indoors 2-4 weeks before last frost and transplant carefully when all chances of frost has passed and warmer night temperatures prevail.

Do not let seedlings become root-bound in containers. Space the plants 30 - 45cm apart. Trellising is a great advantage.

Full sun, ample moisture, rich soil and a lot of heat are all the plants need to produce abundant fruits.

Harvesting:

Pick fruits (of edible varieties) when young and tender, allow inedible varieties to mature and dry on the plant. Luffa sponges form inside the fruits.

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