

All About Lavender



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Lavender Makes a Gardener Look Good!

- Relatively easy to grow
- Is a perennial plant
- Only needs occasional attention
- Uses less water than other crops (once established)



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- Lavender can be grown in poor soils
- Can be used in phytoremediation of heavy metal contaminated soils



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- Lavender is a perennial shrub in the mint family
 - Square stems
 - Opposite leaves
 - Butterfly shaped flowers
 - Aromatic



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Mature Size of Lavender Plants

- Can range in size from 1 foot in diameter to 6 ft or more for some hybrid cultivars



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Lavender Flowers

- Flowers are clustered on a spike called an inflorescence
- Flowering time is from May to late summer depending on location and weather conditions
- Duration of bloom time is 2-3 weeks
- Flower colors range from white, pink, light lavender to deep, dark purple



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Where does lavender originate?

- Lavender is a desert plant
- It prefers hot, dry, sunny, cloud-free summers
- Prefers low humidity and mild, wet winters
- Needs well-draining, alkaline soils
- Is a woody shrub that can live for up to 10 years
- Most commercial lavender is grown in France



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What if I don't live in a desert climate?

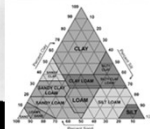
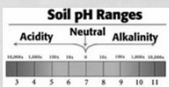
- Lavender can survive in growing zones 5-9
- Plant in full sun
- Be aware of soil needs for lavender



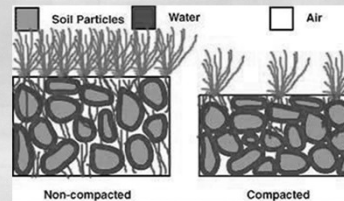
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Soil Requirements

- Sandy loam to coarse/gravelly
- Alkaline pH (around 7 is ideal)
- If too alkaline, boron deficiency can be an issue
- Porous and well-drained (lavender cannot tolerate wet feet; root issues are the biggest problem with lavender) both in winter and summer



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- Reduce foot traffic and machinery traffic
- Add organic matter
- Cover crops

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How do I improve my soil?

- Do a soil test and find out pH (can add lime to increase pH)
- Observe planting area for ponding after heavy rains
- Plant in a raised bed or raised row to assist with draining



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Lavender vs Lavandin

- Lavandin is considered a separate species
- *Lavandula x intermedia*
- Lavandin is considered a hybrid lavender
- Plants are usually larger than English lavender
- Longer and larger flower spikes than English lavender
- Produce more oil than English lavender
- Flower later in the year than English lavender

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- Lavandin produces 3 times more oil than English lavender
- Often used to make commercially produced fragrances such as household soaps and detergents
- Not necessarily an inferior quality than English lavender, just has different uses



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Essential Oil Production

- English lavender oil 0% to 0.6% camphor
- Lavandin oil contained 6% - 10% camphor
- Essential oil is a hydrosol (a water based compound generated through distillation)
- Camphor is a waxy, flammable transparent solid commonly used in creams, ointments and lotions
- Derived through camphor trees or from turpentine oil
- Camphor gives lavender oils a more pungent and stronger smell



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Lavender Plant Care

- Takes 3 years to reach maturity
- No fertilization needed
- Once established, light watering needed during dry periods
- Annual pruning and shaping needed to prevent it from getting woody
- Gravel can be used as a mulch
- Proper spacing at planting time for good air flow



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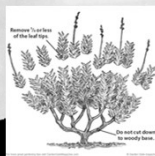
Winter Protection



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How to prune lavender

- Prune annually to keep rounded shape
- To prune, trim off 1/3 of lavender foliage, leaving at least 2–3" of green, soft foliage, taking care not to cut into the woody part of the plant
- Prune in late winter/early spring



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Harvesting Lavender

- Harvest lavender when the bottom flowers are just opening
- Lavender is at its peak for color and fragrance at this time
- Cut the stems down to the foliage



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Drying Lavender Bouquets

- Hang bouquets up-side-down, suspended from a nail, string or wire in a hot, dark, dry location
- Allow the lavender to dry for about 10-14 days



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Fresh Bouquet Care

- Cut when it blooms and do not place it in water.
- The water just accelerates the florets falling off of the stems and the stems get very mushy, messy and smelly.
- Cut them, place them in a vase or bottle.
- They will dry on their own.
- Grosso and Hidcote dry very nicely this way and the florets stay on the stem quite well.

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Propagating Lavender

- Can use hardwood or softwood cuttings
- Use blossom free stems
- Cut healthy, straight, vigorous stems
- Cut a segment 3-4 inches long just below a leaf node
- Remove leaves from bottom 2 inches of cutting
- Dip in rooting hormone
- Place in soil
- Put some type of cover over pot to help with humidity
- Softwood cuttings should root in 2-4 weeks, hardwood cuttings take longer
- Keep misted with water during this time



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Cultivars of Lavender

- **Lavendula**
 - Grosso
 - Provençe
 - Dutch
 - Phenomenal (cold hardiness, heat hardiness, and tolerance to humidity)
- **English Lavender**
 - Hidcote
 - Munstead

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Current Research Project

- 3 sites in Missouri
- Cultivar trials
- Grower guides for homeowners and commercial producers
- Workshops and farm tours
- Lavender for pollinators
- Essential oil distillation



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What can you do with lavender?

- Enjoy it in the garden
- Dried bundles
- Fresh bundles
- Essential oil (the lavender oil market is expected to surpass \$124 million by the end of 2024 in the U.S.)
- Culinary uses
- Body care products such as lotions

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Questions? Cultivar Recommendations? Lavender successes?



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