

Enjoyment and Maintenance

After the initial planting regularly remove all weeds and keep plant starts well watered. Once plants are established reduce watering significantly to Rosemary, Oregano, Sage and other Mediterranean herbs. Depending on your location any annuals you grow may overwinter. Dig plants to move indoors during winter or save seeds and leave plants outside as a test.

Harvest no more than 30 percent of a plant's leaves and stems. Use fresh in cooking or for teas and medicinal purposes or dry on screens for later projects. Most herb seeds develop after flowers bloom and are ready for harvest in late summer and fall. Flowers fade and leave seed heads which brown and dry out. Clip stems with seed heads and allow seeds to dry away from direct sun before packing into jars. Mold and moisture destroys seeds.

Yearly applications of compost and monthly feedings of liquid seaweed fertilizer will be enough to keep your herbs healthy and vibrant. Have no fear in trimming back vigorous growers that crowd out other plants. You will need to maintain the balance of your spiral.

Further Reading

Plants for a Future Database. www.pfaf.org

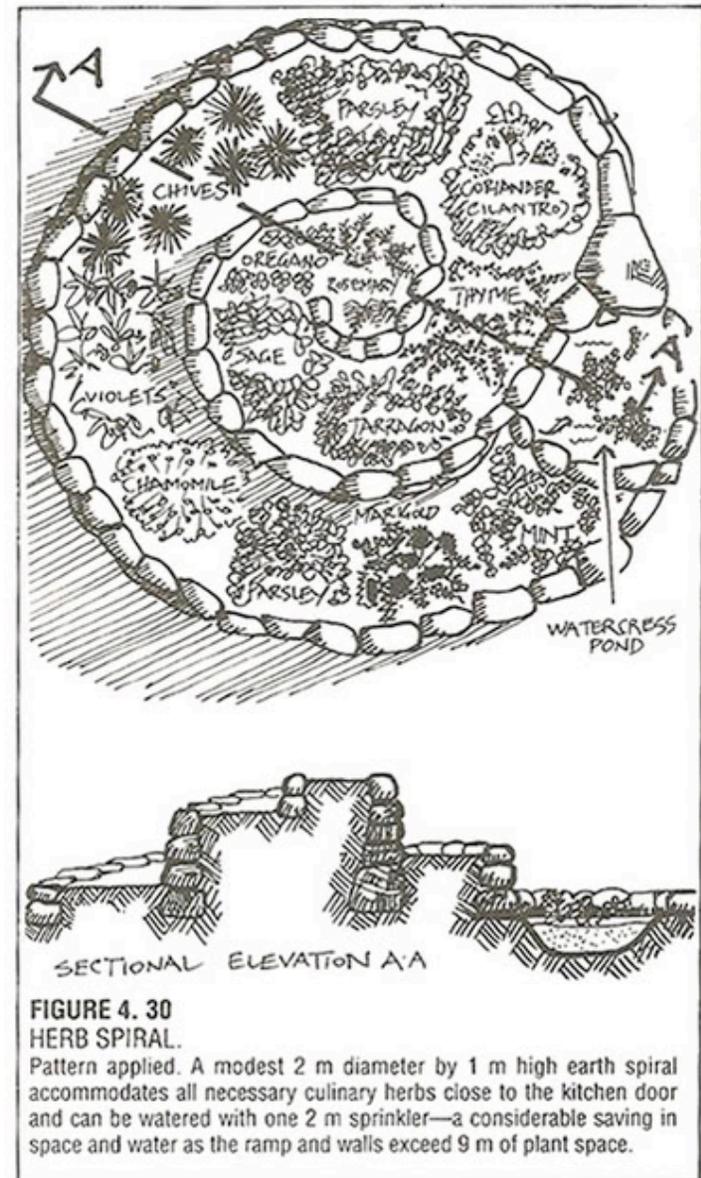
Winter Sown Seed Saving. www.wintersown.org

Herb Spiral. www.theherb Spiral.com

You Tube Videos: Permaculture - Herb Spiral



Philadelphia Seed Exchange



Herb Spirals and Seed Saving
- Growing with Microclimates -

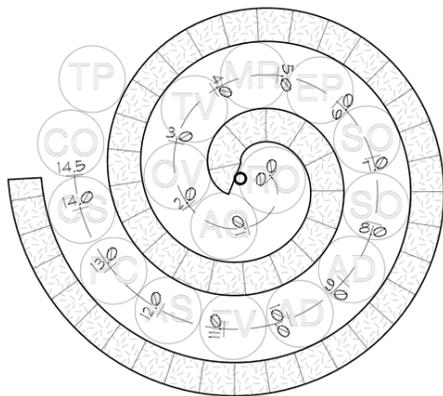
Introduction

Herb spirals are attractive permanent raised garden beds incorporating microclimates to create a diversity of growing conditions in a small space. Soil moisture can vary dramatically between saturated at the low point to desert dry on top of the mound. There are hundreds of different designs gardeners have created to fulfill their culinary and medicinal plant needs. We recommend an online image search to inspire the creative possibilities. Apartment dwellers and gardeners with small community plots have posted ingenious designs. Larger gardens have expanded the spiral motif to encompass hundreds of square feet.

Design and Elements

At its most basic, an herb spiral is an elevated ramp of soil rising 3-4 feet from ground level supported by rocks, bricks, wood, or even buckets. Plants are placed according to the amount of moisture and sun needed to thrive.

First: choose a level site near your kitchen door and clear. Second: stake out your spiral pattern with string. Figure at least 10-12" width for walls and 18-24" width for soil. Third: build your structural walls (mortar is not necessary but will ensure solid walls). Fourth: mix 1/3 compost and 2/3 topsoil and fill the bed area. Fifth: place plants according to the diagram (wet loving plants at the bottom, dry at the top).



PLANTING SCHEDULE			
KEY	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
AS		ALLIUM SCHOENOPRASUM	CHIVES
AG		ANETHUM GRAVEOLENS	DILL
AD		ARTEMISA DRACUNCULUS	TARRAGON
CO		CALENDULA OFFICINALIS	CALNDULA
CS		CORIANDRUM SATIVUM	CORIANDER
EP		ECHINACEA PURPUREA	CONEFLOWER
FV		FOENICULUM VULGARE	FENNEL
MR		MATRICARIA RECUTITA	CHAMOMILLE
OV		ORIGANUM VULGARE	OREGANO
PC		PETROSELINUM CRISPUM	PARSELY
RO		ROSMARINUS OFFICINALIS	ROSEMARY
SO		SALVIA OFFICINALIS	SAGE
TP		TANACETUM PARTHENIUM	FEVERFEW
TV		THYMUS VULGARIS	THYME

Plant Information

Basil - *Ocimum basilicum* - Annual. Allow seed capsules to dry and separate by hand. Basil species cross pollinate.

Calendula - *Calendula officinalis* - Annual. Seeds slow to develop. Mature when grayish-brown. "C" shaped seeds of different sizes. Flowers edible and make fantastic tea for colds. Used as an alternative to saffron.

Chamomile - *Chamaemelum nobile* - Annual. Seeds ready to harvest when blooms turn brown and dry. Seeds in the center of each flower. Species cross pollinate.

Chives - *Allium schoenoprasum* - Perennial. When seed heads start to dry cut, dry further indoors. Species does not cross with other alliums.

Cilantro/Coriander - *Coriandrum sativum* - Perennial or Annual. Harvest when round brown seeds are dry on the plant. Species cross pollinate.

Dill - *Anethum graveolens* - Perennial. Harvest seeds when umbels dry and brown. Clip stems and shake in a bag to loosen seeds.

Feverfew - *Tanacetum parthenium* - Perennial. Look for brown flower head and stem before harvesting. Seeds light-wheat colored and look like bits of thin line.

Mint - *Mentha spp.* - Perennial. Allow seed capsules to dry and separate by hand. Mint, catnip, spearmint and lemon balm, all spread underground. It is advisable to plant in a submerged clay pot to limit spread.

Parsley - *Pimpinella anisum* - Annual. Harvest seeds when dry and hand thresh. Dig roots before hard frost, trim to 2" tops and store in sand or sawdust at 32-40 F, plant out early spring. Species cross pollinate.

Rosemary - *Rosmarinus officinalis* - Perennial. Tie a paper bag around dry flowers before clipping stems to collect as many seeds as possible. Easiest to propagate with clippings. Severe drought tolerant.

Sage - *Salvia officinalis* - Perennial. Harvest seeds when blooms turn brown and dry. Hand thresh. Do not plant near basil, rue or wormwood.

Tarragon - *Artemisia dracunculus* - Perennial. Harvest seeds when blooms turn brown and dry. Relative of ragweed.

Thyme - *many kinds* - Perennial. Harvest dry clusters of flowers. Crush over piece of paper, little black spheres appear when seeds are ready.

Oregano - *Origanum vulgare* - Perennial. Snip stems and turn flower bracts upside down over plate or cloth.

Watercress - *Nasturtium microphyllum* - Annual. Plant in small pond or wet soil. Loves growing in water. Allow seed pods to dry on plant. Snip stems and hand thresh. Seeds very small and yellow.