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# Carrots

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## Planting

- Carrots should be planted between Mar 10 and Aug 1, March 20 and July 15, and April 1 to July 1, in Western, Central and Eastern Kentucky.
- Plant at 3 week intervals to have carrots throughout the growing season.
- Plant seeds at a depth of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch
- Final plant spacing should be 2 to 3 inches apart.
- If planting in a container, it should be 10 inches deep.

## Care and Harvest

- Carrots can take a long time to germinate, so pulling weeds too early, may damage seedlings. The long period of germination can also mean that weeds become a problem, so ensure that the bed is free of weeds and weed seeds before planting.
- Water about 1 inch per week (including rain), taking care during establishment and root enlargement.
- Excess nitrogen may reduce yield or the quality of fruit, so use less than with other plants. If using compost as a nutrient source, be sure it is fully matured, or it may inhibit germination.
- As they grow, some carrots may poke up out of the ground. These should be covered with soil to prevent them from turning green, which makes them bitter.
- Carrots are ready to harvest 60-80 days after planting in the spring or summer and 80-90 days after planting in the fall, or as soon as they reach the desired size. Leaving them in the ground longer can make them fibrous.



## Storage and Use

- After harvesting, wash the roots and dry them thoroughly.
- Trim tops to ½ before storing the carrots to maintain root quality during storage.
- Carrots will keep for 2 to 4 weeks and can be stored in the refrigerator or a cold, moist cellar.
- Do not store carrots with apples. The ethylene produced by ripe apples can cause carrots to taste bitter.
- Carrots should be water blanched for 3 minutes or steam blanched for 5 minutes before freezing.
- Slice carrots and use a hot pack methods and leave 1 inch of head space if canning. Process in a pressure canner for 25 minutes for pints and 30 minutes for quarts.



## References

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## RECIPE: ROASTED CARROTS

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss together:
- 1 ½ pounds carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks
- Olive or vegetable oil to lightly coat
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme or several sprigs fresh thyme
- Oregano, parsley, and garlic are other herbs used in roasting carrots.
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Spread the carrots in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until golden and tender, about 1 hour.

