



COUNTERTOP HARVEST

A FREE PRINTABLE PLANNER

The *30-Day* Indoor Herb Planner

Plant, water, harvest. One small step a day to your first month of fresh herbs on the kitchen counter.

Basil

Mint

Parsley

Cilantro

Chives

countertopharvest.netlify.app



START HERE

How to use this planner

Most indoor herbs die for one of two reasons: **too little light** or **the wrong amount of water**. This planner fixes both with one small habit a day.

1

Print & pin it up

Keep the calendar on the fridge or near your herbs, where you'll see it every morning.

2

One task a day

Each day takes under five minutes. Tick the box when it's done, and skip ahead if a task doesn't apply.

3

Check the herb cards

Pages 5–6 cover light, water and harvest for the five easiest kitchen herbs.

4

Fix problems fast

Leaves yellow or stems leggy? Page 7 matches each symptom to its likely cause and fix.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ 1–3 pots with drainage holes & saucers
- ☐ Fresh potting mix (not garden soil)
- ☐ Seeds or nursery starts
- ☐ A sunny window *or* an LED grow light
- ☐ Liquid fertilizer (from week 3)

THE TWO GOLDEN RULES

Light first.

Herbs want about 6+ hours of strong light. In winter or a dim kitchen, a grow light makes the biggest difference.

Water by touch.

Push a finger in. Water only when the top inch is dry, then let it drain.

Your 30-day checklist

WEEK 1

Set up

DAY

1

☐

Pick 1-3 herbs to start (basil, mint or chives are easiest)

DAY

2

☐

Choose your brightest spot: a south or west window, or plan a grow light

DAY

3

☐

Gather pots with drainage holes, saucers and potting mix

DAY

4

☐

Plant seeds or pot up nursery starts; label each pot

DAY

5

☐

Water gently until it drains; empty the saucer

DAY

6

☐

Check light: 6+ hrs of sun, or 12-16 hrs under an LED

DAY

7

☐

Rest day: just look, don't water unless dry

NOTES

DAY

8

☐

Finger test: water only when the top inch is dry

DAY

9

☐

Rotate pots a quarter turn for even growth

DAY

10

☐

Thin seedlings to the strongest 2-3 per pot

DAY

11

☐

Note which herb looks happiest in your log

WEEK 2

Settle in

DAY

12

☐

Set the grow light 6-12 in above leaves (or per its instructions)

DAY

13

☐

Check saucers: no standing water

DAY

14

☐

Wipe dust off leaves with a damp cloth

NOTES

Know your herbs



Basil

Ocimum basilicum

The warm-weather favorite. Loves heat and light; hates cold drafts.



LIGHT

6–8 hrs of direct sun, or 14–16 hrs under a grow light. Leggy stems mean it needs more.



WATER

Keep evenly moist and never let the mix dry out completely, but don't let it sit soggy.



HARVEST

Snip young leaves and tips from the top, just above a leaf pair. Harvest before it flowers.



COMFORT

Rooms of 65–70°F by day suit it. Basil can't survive below 50°F, so keep it off cold winter sills.



Mint

Mentha spp.

Vigorous and forgiving, but it spreads fast. Give it its own pot.



LIGHT

Full sun to part shade. It's most productive with more light but copes with less.



WATER

Likes consistently moist soil, so check every couple of days.



HARVEST

Cut stems often, just above a leaf pair. Frequent cutting keeps it compact.



TIP

It spreads aggressively by runners, so give it its own pot (12–16 in across is ideal).



Parsley

Petroselinum crispum

Slow to start, then steady for months. Flat-leaf has the most flavor.



LIGHT

6–8 hrs of direct light (tolerates light shade), or 12–16 hrs under a grow light.



WATER

Don't let it dry out completely between waterings.



HARVEST

Cut the outer stems at the base and let the center keep growing.



TIP

Seeds take 2–5 weeks to sprout. Soak them in warm water for up to 24 hrs, or start from a nursery plant.



Cilantro

Coriandrum sativum

A cool-season herb that bolts (flowers) in heat, so sow little and often.



LIGHT

6 hrs of sun is ideal, but it tolerates lower light than most herbs. Keep it in a cooler spot.



WATER

Keep it evenly moist in a well-drained mix.



HARVEST

Snip leaves as needed, before it flowers. After bolting the leaves turn lacy and bitter.



TIP

Heat makes it bolt. Sow a new pot every 2–3 weeks for a steady supply.



Chives

Allium schoenoprasum

The easiest herb on this list. Snip, and it grows right back.



LIGHT

A bright, sunny window or a grow light. It tolerates less light than most herbs, but growth slows in winter.



WATER

Keep the soil evenly moist. It survives the odd dry spell, but grows less.



HARVEST

Cut leaves back to 1–2 in above the soil. Regular cutting keeps them tender.



TIP

Clumps get crowded. Divide and repot them every 2–4 years. Snip off spent flower stalks.

AT A GLANCE

	LIGHT	WATER	EASE
Basil	High	Even	●●○
Mint	Medium	Moist	●●●
Parsley	High	Even	●●○
Cilantro	Medium	Moist	●○○
Chives	Medium	Even	●●●

Sources: UMN Extension, extension.umn.edu (basil, parsley and chives guides) · Penn State Extension, extension.psu.edu/growing-herbs-indoors · Iowa State Extension, yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu (indoor herbs, supplemental lights, mint) · Clemson HGIC, hgic.clemson.edu (cilantro) · UW–Madison, hort.extension.wisc.edu (cilantro) · UMD Extension (mint) · USU Extension (chives). Homes vary, so watch your plants.

What your herbs are telling you

Find the symptom, check the likely cause, then try the fix. Most problems come back to light or water.

YOU SEE	LIKELY CAUSE	TRY THIS
Leggy, stretched stems	Not enough light	Move it closer to the window, add a grow light 6–12 in above the leaves, and pinch the tips.
Yellow lower leaves	Overwatering or poor drainage	Let the top inch dry out, use pots with holes, and empty saucers.
Wilting, dry soil	Underwatering	Water slowly until it drains, then check every 1–2 days.
Wilting, wet soil	Root stress from soggy soil	Stop watering and let it dry. Repot into fresh mix if it smells sour.
Black spots on basil	Cold draft or cold glass	Move it away from the window at night and keep it above 50°F.
Flowers / bolting	Heat or age (basil, cilantro)	Pinch off the buds, harvest more often, and sow cilantro again.
Sticky leaves, webbing	Aphids or spider mites	Rinse the plant, wipe the leaves, and isolate it. Insecticidal soap if needed.
White fuzz on the soil	Too damp, low airflow	Scrape it off, water less, and add a small fan or open a window.



Still stuck? Our guide *"Why is my indoor basil dying?"* walks through the fixes with photos: countertopharvest.netlify.app/why-is-my-indoor-basil-dying.html

Notes

Herbs I planted

Where they live & light hours

Observations



Happy growing.

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