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The Coastal Chilli Company (Garden Products Testing & Development Ltd)





## Where to grow <

Chillies need a warm, sunny spot for the best results and the hottest chillies.

Ideally, grow them in a greenhouse or raise them in pots on a sheltered, south-facing patio or windowsill.

### How to care

Chillies prefer a daytime soil temperature of 20°C and a night-time temperature of 10-20 °C for best results.

Water little and often. As soon as the first flowers appear, feed weekly with a highpotash liquid fertiliser such as tomato feed.

Support tall or top-heavy plants by tying loosely to a bamboo cane.

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## Common problems %

Look for colonies of greenfly on the soft shoot tips of plants or on the underside of leaves. They suck sap and excrete sticky honeydew, encouraging the growth of black sooty moulds.

Use your finger and thumb to squash aphid colonies or use biological control in the greenhouse.

#### When to harvest

Chillies will be ready to pick from late summer. For the mildest flavour, pick chillies while they're still green, leave them to mature for more heat.

Picking fruits as they are ready encourages more fruit to set.

# Storing Chillies

Chillies can be refrigerated or cooked from frozen. They can be dried, prepared with garlic and oil to make a paste or pickled in vinegar. Store dried chillies in an airtight jar in a cool, dark place, or chop them roughly to make chilli flakes.

## Preparing and cooking Chillies

Chillies add heat and flavour to curries, stir-fries, salsas and sauces. Remove the seeds for less of a kick.

A Never touch your face or eyes while picking or preparing chillies.

## Overwintering ?

Most people sow seeds late winter or buy young plants in the spring, grow and harvest fruits during the summer and autumn, and then throw their plants away and start afresh the following year.

However, overwintering your plants gives you a head start.

#### The plants will:

- · Start producing fruit much earlier.
- Be more sturdy and more capable of supporting more fruit.

Chillies are perennials and capable of lasting for several years.

Ideally, overwinter your chillies in a cool, bright room with temperatures between 10 and 15 °C. Make sure the temperature never goes below 10 °C.

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#### How to overwinter?



- 1. Pick and remove all fruit.
- 2. Prune by removing up to half of the foliage. Nodes are like a crossroads along a pepper plant's stem. They are important points from which new leaves and stems can grow. The long parts between nodes are simply called internodes.
- 3. When choosing which parts of your pepper plants to prune, you want to envision how the plant will re-grow after you have pruned.

The remaining nodes will be critical points for new growth.

Prune just above the 4th node, counting from the base of the stem at compost level.





Light levels during the winter are much lower, the strength of the sun is weaker, and days are shorter. Chillies originate areas of the world that don't have winters, so it is common for the plants to become stressed by the low light levels and shed their leaves and go dormant.

When this happens watering must be reduced, overwatering causes waterlogged compost that kills off the roots.

In early spring the increased light levels should stimulate new growth, so watering should be gradually increased as the new leaves appear.

This is the ideal time to re-pot your plant using a good quality peat-free container and basket compost.