



LET'S GROW POTATOES

Follow the directions below to see how you can grow potatoes in your own classroom. It's easy to do, and you only need a handful of items. Plus, you don't even need a garden to get started.

WHAT YOU NEED

1. **The potato type that you'd like to grow**
2. **A container with sufficient drainage**
3. **Soil**
4. **Lots of sun**
5. **Water**



DIRECTIONS

1. First you'll need a container. It's possible to grow potatoes in any container, from large to small garbage cans. Whatever container you choose, make a hole at the bottom and find something to put under the containers to catch the drainage (like a plastic tray).
2. Fill the container with 6 inches of soil. Quantity depends on the size of the container.
3. When you're ready to plant, you can choose a seed potato or you can use store-bought organic potatoes that you've allowed to sprout in a cool dark place. Certified seed potatoes can be purchased from a garden store. The eyes should be sprouting! You can either plant your potato whole, or cut the potato into quarter pieces, that have at least two eyes per piece. Place the pieces 6-12 inches apart on top of the soil.
4. Add three to four more inches of soil to cover the potatoes, then water the soil until it's damp, but not soggy.
5. Now it's time to watch your potatoes grow. Make sure your plants are getting plenty of sunshine and water.
6. For every 7-10 inches of growth, add 3-4 more inches of soil around the base of the plant. Be careful not to break the plant while doing this.
7. Continue to repeat this process until the soil reaches the top of your container.
8. After about 60 days the potatoes begin to bulk up as the plant also produces flowers. Once the potatoes are mature the plant begins to die and it is time to harvest. In general, total time between planting and harvest is about four months.
9. When you're ready, just simply empty the container out on a tarp and dig out those potatoes!

LIFECYCLE OF A POTATO

Here you can see the life cycle of the potato, starting with the plant emerging from the seed piece that's planted in the ground. At first, the growth is more on the plant and roots to make sure it is viable and healthy. Then the potatoes begin to develop.

