

Source: <https://www.theenglishgarden.co.uk/choice/how-to-take-cuttings-in-6-easy-steps/>

How To Take Cuttings

1. Time it right

If you want to take cuttings from a parent plant, such as a salvia, early spring is usually the best time to do it. It's an easy and satisfying way to increase your stock of plants. It's always best to take cuttings early in the morning, when the parent plant is still turgid, i.e. full of water. This guarantees the best chance of rooting.



2. Cutting instructions

Use a clean pair of secateurs or a sharp knife to cut a few healthy stems to a length of about 10cm.

Trim the stems just below a node (or leaf joint). This is where there is the greatest concentration of dormant root buds.



3. Handle carefully

Handle the prepared cuttings very carefully, ideally by a leaf, so that you don't do any damage to the stem.



4. Prepare growing medium

Prepare a light, open compost and water it generously before planting.



5. Plant cuttings

Using a dibber or a pencil, insert the cuttings to just below a leaf break, making sure you don't crowd the pot.



6. Position the pot

Put the pot in a heated propagator with a hood, or cover it with a clear plastic bag. Place in light, but not direct, sun.

If you're looking to take cuttings this is a great way to propagate early in the season.

What to do

How to take the cuttings

- Choose healthy, pest-free and non-flowering shoots of new growth. Snip from the parent plant and collect inside a plastic bag - add a few drops of water and shake to prevent the plant material wilting while you're going round the garden taking your cuttings.
- Cuttings should be 5 to 10cm (2 to 4in) long. Prepare by making a straight cut beneath a pair of leaves and then remove several sets of lower leaves that would rot in the soil if left behind.
- Keep only one or two pairs of leaves at the tip. Most cuttings root better if the cut end is dipped in hormone rooting liquid or powder.
- Fill a pot with free-draining compost (a mix of 50 per cent cuttings compost and 50 per cent horticultural grit), level and firm.
- Insert several cuttings around the edge of a pot, keeping their leaves clear of the surface and water well.
- Take several cuttings from each shrub to increase your chance of success. Label if you're making cuttings of several varieties.
- Put in a propagator or cover the pot with a clear plastic bag, held in place with an elastic band, to stop the cuttings from drying out.
- Put in a light place until rooted.

Aftercare

- Keep cuttings damp and grow on until they have rooted.
- Check by looking for roots growing through the holes at the base of the pot, or by gently tugging at the plants after three weeks. If there's resistance, they may have rooted.
- Pot each rooted cutting individually and plant out when they have filled their new pot with roots.
- When plants are about 15cm (6in) tall pinch out the tips to encourage new branches to grow.