

# Growing Sunflower Sprouts

With large seeds that are easy for kids to manipulate and a fast growth rate, sunflower greens make great first gardening projects for kids to try at home. Gardening is not only fun, it's a great learning experience too, offering kids the opportunity to learn about roots, stems, and leaves firsthand and helping to get picky eaters interested in healthy greens!

## What You Need:

- 1 cup raw sunflower seeds in the hulls
- Jar
- Water
- Flat gardening tray
- Soil
- Paper towels

## What You Do:

1. Have your child place the sunflower seeds in a jar and fill it with water. Leave them to soak overnight.
2. Drain and rinse the seeds together, removing any hulls that come loose.
3. Help him fill the gardening tray with dirt.
4. Spread the seeds evenly over the dirt, then lay damp paper towels over them.
5. Check the tray once or twice a day, watering it whenever the paper towels dry out.
6. After three or four days when the sprouts are beginning to push through, remove the paper towels and move the tray to a spot with lots of direct sunlight.
7. On the fifth or sixth day, when the plants are fairly large, pull up one of them from the soil and show your child its roots, stems, and leaves. Talk about the parts of a plant with him. What do the roots do? How about the leaves and stems?
8. Harvest the greens on the seventh or eighth day, before they grow their second set of leaves. After this happens, they tend to take on a bitter flavor.
9. Toss the greens with other spring vegetables and a little dressing for a light, healthy meal, or store them in the refrigerator for later. Refrigerated, they should keep for up to 2 weeks.

