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Saving zinnia seeds, sunflower seeds, and more!

When to Harvest Seeds?

Seed harvesting happens in most regions the fall. The seeds of most flowers are ready to harvest about a month after the blossoms fade, when the seed heads turn brown.

Any sunny day after the dew has dried off is the best time of the day to gather your flower heads for processing. With flowers, we are able to use a dry processing method by allowing the seeds to fully dry on the plant before collecting.

By allowing the flower heads to hang on the flowers past their floral prime and let the autumn winds dry them out, our work becomes that much easier.



How to Save Flower Seeds

When the plants have fully turned brown and dried up is the best time to go around and gather the ripe or mature flower seeds, the viable entities that contain all of the starter food and genetic information wrapped in their protective covering, for next seasons beauty.

1. Gather ripe seeds on a dry, sunny day.
2. Using your garden clips, simply cut and collect the stalks or just flower heads into the labeled bag.
3. At home, you will separate out the seeds from the chaff. Clean the seeds by removing any husks or pods. Try to separate as much debris from the seeds as possible since chaff can harbor insect eggs or fungi.
4. Be sure they are dry, to a crisp. Even if the seeds appear dry when you collect them, spread them out on paper, cookie sheet, or screen in a cool and darkened area to dry for about a week before storing. Good air flow with a gentle fan can help move the drying process along.

5. My system for saving seed is simple. I write out the name and variety of the flower that I am collecting on a small brown paper bag and then cut the flower heads into the bags. At home, I process each variety based on how dry or ready for storage each seed is.

12 Annual Flowers to Harvest Seeds From

Many of the seeds from annual flowers that we love to plant can be saved for future use. As well, many perennials can too as a great way to propagate your stock. Below is a list of some of the more common annual flowers many of which I save yearly here on the farm.

- Bachelors Button
- Cleome
- Cosmos
- Coneflower
- Calendula
- Delphinium
- Impatiens
- Marigold
- Morning Glories
- Nasturtium
- Pansies
- Poppy
- Rudbeckia
- Scabiosa
- Snapdragon
- Sunflower
- Zinnia

Some Tips for Beginners

- Flowers with large seeds are especially easy to collect, including [sunflowers](#), [morning glories](#), [cosmos](#), [hollyhocks](#), [calendula](#), and [zinnias](#).
- [Plants like delphiniums](#), [cleome](#), [nicotiana](#), [nigella](#), [mallows](#), and [foxglove](#) have small seeds that are contained in large seed pods, making them easy to harvest, too.
- With some plants such as [poppies](#) and [columbine](#). seed collecting is as easy as waiting till the pods dry on the plants and putting them in an envelope.
- [Coneflowers](#), [black-eyed Susans](#), and **other daisy-like flowers** hold their seeds longer making them easy to collect.
- Pansies and impatiens, on the other hand, tend to scatter their seed before you even notice it is ripe.
- If the seeds you are waiting for might drop before you can collect them, try tying a small paper or cloth bag over the ripening seed pods.

Happy Seed Saving!

See <https://www.almanac.com/how-save-flower-seeds-next-year> for complete article.