



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 high-potash liquid fertiliser such as tomato feed.

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

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 1

Most Chillies can be treated as perennial houseplants but may need pruning in winter. Best results are achieved with the smaller, more compact varieties such as Apache, Chenzo and Caynenetta.

How is heat measured

A chillies' heat is measured on the Scoville scale, a test created over a century ago, in which the more water needed to dilute a chilli solution before a human taster can no longer detect the chilli determines the number of Scoville's.

How to Treat a Chilli Burn

Chillies contain Capsaicin, a natural oil. So, in order to get rid of the pain, you have the neutralize the alkaline oil.

The best way to do that is with something acidic. You cannot wash away a hot pepper burn with soap and water.

- 1. Douse or soak the area in milk
- Spread butter or yogurt on the burning area.
- 3. Wash your hands with olive oil until the pain goes away and then wash your hands with soap and water.
- 4. Make a thick paste of baking soda and water and apply it directly to your hands. Leave it on until it dries before washing off.

Use whatever method will work best with where your burn is. If you don't have olive oil you can substitute with vegetable oil.

Remember that the best prevention for hot Chilli hands is to use gloves.