

## Gardening: Growing Vegetables

### 9:30-9:45 Ice Breaker

What was the best thing that happened this last week?

What was the worst thing that happened this last week?



Have you ever grown your own vegetables? It's easy when you grow them from seeds. The **benefits** include saving money, getting a **head start** on the **growing season**, and choosing **varieties** of plants not commonly found in **nurseries** or **gardening centers**.

**Starting Times:** As a general rule, start seeds six to eight weeks before your average last **frost date**. If you start seeds too early, you'll have to keep the **seedlings** inside too long, and they'll be weak by **transplant time**.

### What You Need:

**Containers:** You can use almost anything you want for your containers: cardboard egg cartons, **nursery flats**, **disposable aluminum pans**. Whatever you choose, make sure the container has holes in the bottom to allow the water **to drain** out.

**Seed-Starting Mix:** Use a **sterile**, weed-free seed starting mix that holds water well.

**Quality Seeds:** Purchase at [www.Burpee.com](http://www.Burpee.com) or [johnnyseeds.com](http://johnnyseeds.com).

**Plant Labels:** Many seedlings look alike, so labels are a good idea. Write the plant names on frozen-dessert sticks or other **labels**, and stick them in the soil. Keep your seed packages for **reference**.

**Care:** Provide the right amount of moisture, warmth and light for your seedlings. Check the **recommendations** on the **seed packages**. For more information about starting plants from seeds, check:  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FGH3MBZ21M>)

## 9:45-10:00 Vocabulary and Conversation

Directions: Explain and give examples of any new vocabulary.

1. practical benefits	11. weak
2. head start	12. nursery flats
3. growing season	13. disposable aluminum pans
4. varieties	14. to drain
5. nurseries	15. sterile
6. garden centers	16. labels
7. frost date	17. reference
8. seedlings	18. recommendations
9. transplant time	19. seed packages
10. heirloom tomatoes	20. kale

Directions: Complete and practice the conversation below using the present perfect: **has** already **started**, **hasn't started**, **have** you ever **started**, **has started**, and **have started**.

*Tim enters house. It is early Spring.*

Tim: I was talking to Doris next door. She has plans for a vegetable garden this year. In fact, Doris \_\_\_\_\_ cucumber plants from seeds in her basement. \_\_\_\_\_ you ever \_\_\_\_\_ plants from seeds?

Susan: Yes, I \_\_\_\_\_ several kinds of vegetable plants from seeds. Do you remember our garden a few years ago? We had cucumbers, **heirloom tomatoes**, green beans and kale. We started those heirloom tomato plants from seed in March.

Tim: Oh, yes. I remember seeing all those egg cartons filled with little plants in your basement. Those heirloom tomatoes that you grew were delicious.

Susan: Yes, they were. Maybe it's not too late for me to start some plants from seeds this year. Do you know if Doris \_\_\_\_\_ any tomato plants from seeds?

Tim: No, \_\_\_\_\_ any tomato yet, just cucumber. Oh, wait a minute, she \_\_\_\_\_ tomato plants; I just remembered.

Susan: I wonder what kind of tomato seeds she planted. Do you know if they were those special heirloom tomatoes that we liked so much? I'll go next door and ask Doris.

Doris: Hello. Susan! How are you?

Susan: Just fine, Doris. I heard that you \_\_\_\_\_ cucumber and tomato plants from seeds. How is it going?

Doris: Very well. The seedlings are coming up. They are about three inches tall. I heard that vegetables grow quite well in containers rather than in the ground. I am going to try growing vegetables in containers this year.

Susan: That sounds like a great idea. How do you grow vegetables in containers?

Doris: Oh, it's very easy. You need a big pot that holds a lot of soil. Make sure the pot has holes in the bottom so that when you water, the water will escape. Then, you need potting soil that is designed for containers.

Susan: When do you plant the vegetables in the container?

Doris: My seedlings are ready to transplant into the containers now. You can also plant the seeds directly in the container. I like to have an early crop, so I planted seeds in cardboard egg cartons five weeks ago.

Susan: An early crop sounds good. Would you like some of my special heirloom tomato seeds to plant, now?

Doris: Why, thank you. I would love to try to grow them.

## **10:15-10:40 pm Questions and Practice**

### ***Part I: Discussion Questions***

1. Have you ever started vegetable plants from seeds?
2. Do people in your country do this in their backyards?
3. Is gardening a hobby for young or old people?
4. Do you like looking at gardening shows on TV and reading gardening magazines?
5. What are the names of some famous gardens in your country? In your local area?  
Share about the gardens.
6. Do you think all schools should have a classroom garden?  
Why or why not?
7. Have you ever planted vegetables or flowers in containers?  
If so, what kinds? Would you do it again?
8. Do you need a big garden to enjoy gardening, or can someone living in an apartment also do a bit of gardening?
9. Why do so many people enjoy gardening?

## Part II: Grammar Practice: The Present Perfect Verb Tense

How to form the present perfect: *have or has + past participle*

Example: She **has run** the marathon three times.  
James **has** always **enjoyed** gardening.

When to use the present perfect:

1. To indicate something that occurred at an unspecified time in the past and that affects present time. It is often used with time expressions such as *never*, *already*, *yet*, *frequently*, *several times*, and *often*.
2. To indicate a recent event, often with the word *just* or *recently*. (I have just finished my homework.)
3. To indicate that a state or condition that began in the past is still true now. The words *since* or *for* are common here. (They have known each other for a long time.)

Directions: Interview your classmates. Make questions using the present perfect form of the given verb. Ask and answer the questions.

**Example:**     you / ever / start / plants from seeds  
**Question:** Have you ever started plants from seeds?  
**Answer:** I have never started plants from seeds.  
**Answer:** I have recently started plants from seeds.  
**Answer:** I have started plants from seeds since I have had a bigger house.

1. you / ever / plant / vegetables / in a container
2. you / ever / pick / flowers for a bouquet
3. you / ever / mow / the lawn
4. you / ever / dig / in the soil with a shovel
5. you / ever / sit / on a bee
6. you / ever / water / the garden with a hose
7. you / ever / catch / a fish
8. you / ever / swim / near a big fish
9. you / ever / lose / something very important
10. you / ever / find / something very valuable

**Answers: Tim enters house. It is early Spring.**

- Tim: I was talking to Doris next door. She has plans for a vegetable garden this year. In fact, Doris **has already started** cucumber plants from seeds in her basement. **Have** you ever **started** plants from seeds?
- Susan: Yes, I **have started** several kinds of vegetable plants from seeds. Do you remember our garden a few years ago? We had cucumbers, heirloom tomatoes, green beans and kale. We started those heirloom tomato plants from seeds in March.
- Tim: Oh, yes. I remember seeing all those egg cartons filled with little plants in your basement. Those heirloom tomatoes that you grew were delicious.
- Susan: Yes, they were. Maybe it's not too late for me to start some plants from seeds this year. Do you know if Doris **has started** any tomato plants from seeds?
- Tim: No, **she hasn't started** any tomatoes yet, just cucumbers. Oh, wait a minute, she **has started** tomato plants; I just remembered.
- Susan: I wonder what kind of tomato seeds she planted. Do you know if they were those special heirloom tomatoes that we liked so much? I'll go next door and ask Doris.
- Doris: Hello. Susan! How are you?
- Susan: Just fine, Doris. I heard that you **have started** cucumber and tomato plants from seeds. How is it going?
- Doris: Very well. The seedlings are coming up. They are about three inches tall. I heard that vegetables grow quite well in containers rather than in the ground. I am going to try growing vegetables in containers this year.
- Susan: That sounds like a great idea. How do you grow vegetables in containers?
- Doris: Oh, it's very easy. You need a big pot that holds a lot of soil. Make sure the pot has holes in the bottom so that when you water, the water will escape. Then, you need potting soil that is designed for containers.
- Susan: When do you plant the vegetables in the container?
- Doris: My seedlings are ready to transplant into the containers now. You can also plant the seeds directly in the container. I like to have an early crop, so I planted seeds in cardboard egg cartons five weeks ago.
- Susan: An early crop sounds good. Would you like some of my special heirloom tomato seeds to plant, now?

Doris:           Why, thank you. I would love to try to grow them.