

## Catnip

*Nepeta cataria*



### DESCRIPTION

Catnip is great for more than just your cats! Catnip is a short-lived perennial plant that grows to be 20-40 inches tall and wide and has flowering heads that bloom from late spring to autumn. The name "catnip" comes from the fact that about 2 in 3 domestic cats are attracted to it. In addition to its uses with cats, it is an



ingredient in some herbal teas and is valued for its sedative/relaxant properties. The plant is tolerant to dry conditions and is resistant to deer. It can be a repellent for certain insects, including aphids and squash bugs. It is best grown in full sunlight.

## **Growing Instructions**

### **SOWING THE SEEDS**

Catnip seeds do not require any treatment (e.g. soaking, stratification) before sowing. Catnip seeds grow best when they are raised in trays or other containers and transplanted to the garden once established.

Fill trays, punnets or jiffy pots with a good quality seed-raising mix, or use soil starter pellets.

Sow seeds 5mm deep.

Keep soil moist but never wet or dry.

Seeds should germinate in around 10-20 days at a soil temperature of 21-27°C.

### **GROWING CATNIP**

Transplant seedlings to the garden once they have their first true leaves and are large enough to handle (usually 5-10 cm tall).

Plant out, spacing plants 60cm apart.



Optional: In cool climates catnip seeds can be sown indoors 6 weeks before the last expected frost. Grow them in a warm position with plenty of natural light.

Catnip plants may need watering during the growing season.

Water when the soil is dry about 5 cm below the surface (test this by scratching away a little soil with your finger). Water deeply in the early morning or late afternoon. Avoid watering the leaves of plants to avoid fungal diseases. Catnip plants will grow in nutrient-poor soils and do not need additional fertilizer during the growing season. Deadhead catnip flowers regularly during the growing season. Using sharp secateurs or snips cut fading or dead flowers off just above a set of leaves. Removing old flowers regularly will encourage plants to produce more flowers. Learn more about deadheading flowering plants [here](#). When plants have finished flowering prune them back to neaten them and encourage strong new growth. Using sharp secateurs or snips, cut individual stems just above a set of lower leaves. Catnip plants may die back in cold weather. Cut plants back just above ground level in late autumn, or prune off dead foliage when new leaves emerge in spring.