



How to save your supermarket basil

Basil plants from supermarkets look pretty and fresh but their pots are usually too small to make them last long. Follow this guide to save them from dying.

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INTRODUCTION

Basil is one of the most popular kitchen herbs ever. Maybe it's because its smell makes us think of a warm summer evening and Nonna cooking the best Pasta Bolognese ever—at least that's what I imagine when I put basil all over my homemade pasta dishes in a pseudo-virtuos manner.

So if you're a basil addict like me, you might have been tempted to buy one of these good- and fresh-looking basil pot plants from the supermarket. In most cases, they're basically a way too voluminous plant in a way too tiny pot—which you'll probably realize after buying it, harvesting once or twice and having it around for a few days: The basil might not look as fresh and happy anymore then. So let's step right into making it last long!

Step 1 — How to save your supermarket basil



- Here's what you need to prepare:
 - Your supermarket basil giving you that sad look that'll make you finish this guide in less than 30 minutes.
 - 2–3 pots depending on the size of the plant.
 - Some garden soil and a little spade.
 - ① Unlike other herbs, basil has a high demand for nutrients. He prefers nutritious and humid soil that is slightly damp and porous. A pH level from 6,5 to 7,5 is ideal.
 - Some pebble stones (alternatively clay fragments).

Step 2



- Fill each pot with a single layer of pebble stones (alternatively clay fragments).
- ❗ Congratulations! You created a drainage layer. A drainage layer helps you avoid waterlogging and root rot due to overwatering.

Step 3



- Fill each pot with garden soil up to the half.

Step 4



- Dig a hole into the soil of each pot.

Step 5



- Now it's time to gently liberate the basil plant from its initial pot.
- ⚠ Be careful not to hurt the plant during this step. In most cases the roots of supermarket basil stick out of the pot's bottom holes since they're growing faster than the pot can handle.
- ℹ Not kidding: A [spudger](#) can come in handy here to untangle the roots and cautiously set the basil free.

Step 6



- Split the basil up into two or more halves—depending on the size of your plant and the new pots.
- ⓘ You can best do that by slowly and continuously pressing your thumb against the soil to unscramble the roots bit by bit.

Step 7



- After removing surplus soil if needed, you can place the split-up plants in their new pots.
- Gently press them into the earth, fill the pot up with soil just under the rim and stabilize the sprigs by surrounding them with enough soil.
- If there are wilted sprigs, remove them so they don't rob the healthy parts' space and energy.

Step 8 — optional



- To help the basil sprigs recover, you can collect some branches and stick them into the soil as a prop.

Step 9



- Almost done! Spray the soil surface with water.
- ① To grow basil rich, water the plant whenever the soil surface starts getting dry. Basil neither likes it too dry nor too wet, so it's better to water it little but regularly.

Step 10



- As a last step you can place the plants in some nice-looking cachepots aaand...
 - ...don't forget to put it in a sunny spot where it's hopefully safe from wild animals and can flourish in peace.
- i** Basil is a Mediterranean herb so it needs a warm and light place to grow—which can be on your balcony, terrace or even an all-season spot on your windowsill as long as it's not too shady, too cool or too damp.

You made it! Now you can watch your basil recover and grow big. Don't forget to regularly harvest its shoot tips (not just single leaves!) to support its regular and healthy growth.