



**CORNELL
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OF
ONEIDA COUNTY**

HOME GROWN FACTS

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GROWING CHIVES



Great for dressing up potatoes and spicing up salads, this easy-to-grow *Allium*'s pinkish-lavender flowers make an attractive clump or edging in flower gardens.

Site Characteristics

Sunlight:

- full sun
- part shade

Soil conditions:

- tolerates acid soil
- tolerates droughty soil
- tolerates damp soil
- tolerates low fertility

While chives will tolerate a wide range of soil conditions, they prefer slightly acid soil (pH 6.2 to 6.8) with moderate fertility and high organic matter.

Hardiness zones:

- 3 to 9

Chinese and garlic chives (*Allium tuberosum*) are slightly less hardy, only to Zone 4 without extra winter protection.

Special locations:

- outdoor containers
- rock gardens

Plant Traits

Lifecycle: perennial

Ease-of-care: easy

Height: 0.5 to 1 feet

Chinese and garlic chives (*Allium tuberosum*) grow up to 2 feet tall.

Bloom time:

- late spring
- early summer
- late summer
- early fall

Flower color:

- Red, violet, white, pink

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The common garden chive has pinkish lavender flowers. The cultivar 'Forescate' has rose red flowers. 'Corsica' and 'albiflorum' have white flowers. Chinese and garlic chives (*Allium tuberosum*) have white flowers.

Foliage color: medium green

Foliage texture: fine

Shape:

- cushion, mound or clump
- upright
- grass-like

Spreading clump of upright, grass-like leaves

Growing Information

How to plant:

Propagate by seed, division or separation - Direct seed, divide or transplant in spring or fall.

Germination temperature: 45 F to 95 F

Days to emergence: 7 to 21

Seed can be saved 3 years.

Maintenance and care:

In spring or fall, direct seed onto well-prepared seedbed (covering very lightly), or transplant established plants. (If starting from seed, plants probably won't be large enough to harvest for at least a year.)

Regular cutting helps keep plants vigorous and healthy and encourages spreading. Keep flowers picked to discourage dormancy in warm weather.

No fertilizer is needed if planted in reasonably fertile soil. Plants harvested frequently benefit from nitrogen top-dressing.

Divide and replant clump in fresh soil every three to five years.

More growing information: [How to Grow Perennials](#)

Pests:

Not usually harmed.

Diseases:

Not usually infected.

Varieties

The cultivar 'Forescate' has rose red flowers. 'Corsica' and 'albiflorum' have white flowers.

Garlic chives and Chinese chives both have garlic flavor, and belong to a different species, *Allium tuberosum*. They grow taller (up to 2 feet) than common garden chives, and have white flowers.

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