

Okra

Abelmoschus esculentus · Mallow family

DIFFICULTY Easy
TYPE Warm-season annual
MATURITY 8–10 weeks



SUN
Full sun



WATER
Regular



SOIL PH
6.0–7.0



SPACING
40–50cm



DEPTH
1.5–2cm

01 Pod formation

Pods form along the main stem just below the growing tip — pick young and often, since pods left too long toughen quickly and reduce further production.



Pods form below the growing tip, pick young

02 Planting

METHOD	Direct sow after all frost risk has passed and soil has warmed — okra is frost-tender and slow to establish in cool soil.
SOIL	Free-draining, moderately fertile. Tolerates poorer soil better than many warm-season vegetables.
TIMING	Sow in late spring through summer once nights are reliably warm.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

03 Growing care

- Water regularly, especially through flowering and pod set.
- Pick pods young and often — every couple of days once production starts.
- Mulch to retain soil moisture through hot summer weather.
- Stake taller varieties in windy positions once heavily laden with pods.

04 Problems

- Tough, fibrous pods** — from picking too late; harvest at 5–10cm for best texture.
- Aphids** — cluster on new growth; hose off or encourage predatory insects.
- Slow germination in cool soil** — wait until soil is warm before sowing.
- Reduced production** — from letting pods mature on the plant; pick regularly to keep it producing.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Pods reach 5–10cm, still tender enough to snap easily.
METHOD	Cut or snap pods from the stem, wearing gloves if the variety has fine, irritating spines.
CURING	None needed — use fresh, promptly after picking.
STORAGE	Fridge, about 1 week — avoid the coldest part of the fridge, which can cause chilling injury below about 7°C.
PRESERVING	See Freezing Produce (blanching and freezing a glut) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY

Capsicum

Basil

Melon

AVOID NEARBY

No strong known conflicts

ROTATION NOTE

As a member of the mallow family, avoid following okra with itself in the same spot in consecutive seasons.