

Lotus Root

Nelumbo nucifera · Lotus family

DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Aquatic perennial
MATURITY 7–9 months



SUN
Full sun, 6+ hours



WATER
Still water, 10–30cm deep



SOIL PH
6.0–7.0



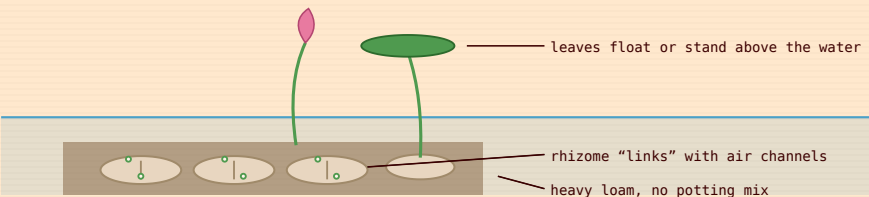
SPACING
One tuber per 60L+ tub



DEPTH
Just buried, tip showing

01 Tub set-up and rhizome

Lotus root is the swollen rhizome of the sacred lotus. Plant it in heavy loam in a wide, watertight tub, with the growing tip just showing, and keep the water above the soil as leaves emerge.



02 Planting

METHOD	Lay a fresh tuber flat on heavy loam in a wide tub, tip exposed, add 5cm of water and raise it as leaves grow.
SOIL	Heavy loam or clay only. Potting mix, compost and mulch float and foul the water.
TIMING	Plant September to October, once the water is above about 15°C.
CONTAINER	A wide, watertight tub of 60L or more with no drainage hole.

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

- Keep water above the soil, topping up as it evaporates.
- Grow in full sun; shade means few leaves and small rhizomes.
- Feed lightly with aquatic fertiliser tablets in summer.
- Control mosquitoes with native Pacific blue-eyes or a Bti dunk.

04 Problems

- **Mosquito breeding** — still water breeds mosquitoes; add native fish or Bti dunks.
- **Aphids** — cluster on young leaves; wash off with a hose jet.
- **Damaged growing tip** — the fragile tip dies if bumped at planting; handle with care.
- **Container too small** — cramped tubs give leaves but tiny rhizomes; use 60L or more.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Leaves yellow and die back in autumn, 7–9 months after planting. Harvest through winter.
METHOD	Drain the tub, feel for the long rhizome and snap off swollen sections. Replant the tip and a few links.
CURING	None needed. Soak cut slices in vinegared water to stop browning.
STORAGE	Fresh roots keep 1–2 weeks wrapped in the fridge. Slice, blanch and freeze for up to 6 months.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying lotus root slices as chips) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY

Water chestnut

Taro

AVOID NEARBY

Koi and large goldfish

ROTATION NOTE

Not applicable — long-lived perennial; divide the tuber and refresh the soil every 2–3 years.