

# How to Cold Stratify Your Seeds

Cold stratify seeds by exposing them to moist, cold conditions (34–38°F) for 1–3 months to break dormancy, simulating winter. The best method involves mixing seeds with damp, not saturated, sand or potting soil in a sealed, labeled plastic bag and placing it in the refrigerator crisper. This technique is essential for many native perennials and shrubs.

## STEPS TO COLD STRATIFY SEEDS

1. **Moisten Medium:** Use a damp, inert medium like peat moss, vermiculite, or sand, or a damp paper towel.
2. **Ensure Proper Moisture:** The medium should be damp, not soggy. When squeezed, it should hold its shape without releasing water.
3. **Combine and Seal:** Place the seeds and moist medium in a resealable plastic bag. For small seeds, you can place them on a damp paper towel within the bag.
4. **Label and Date:** Label the bag with the plant name and the date you placed it in the fridge.
5. **Refrigerate:** Place the bag in the refrigerator (34–38°F), not the freezer, for 3–6 weeks.
6. **Check Regularly:** Every 2–3 weeks, check for mold or premature germination. If mold forms, add new, sterile medium. If seeds sprout, remove them and plant them immediately.

## TOP TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- **Best Time:** Stratify in late winter, about 1–3 months before your expected planting date.
- **Alternative Method:** For some seeds, planting them in pots with soil in late autumn, and leaving them outside is a more natural method.
- **Common Seeds Needed:** Common Milkweed, coneflower (echinacea), lavender, and many native perennials require this process.
- **Do Not Freeze:** The freezer is too cold and will damage the seeds.



## COLD STRATIFYING NATIVE SEEDS

# Long Stratification Method



LABEL CONTAINER WITH THE NAME OF THE PLANT, THE DATE YOU STARTED STRATIFICATION AND THE DATE STRATIFICATION SHOULD BE COMPLETE (TYPICALLY 6-8 WEEKS).



COMBINE YOUR SEED WITH VERMICULITE OR PERLITE AND WATER. SQUEEZE OUT AND POUR OFF ANY EXCESS WATER.



PUT THE CONTAINER IN THE FRIDGE AND CHECK WEEKLY TO ENSURE IT IS STILL MOIST ENOUGH.



CARE FOR YOUR SEEDS AS PRESCRIBED ON YOUR SEED PACKS AND WATCH THEM GROW!



AT THE END OF YOUR STRATIFICATION PERIOD, OR WHEN THEY BEGIN TO GERMINATE (WHICHEVER COMES FIRST), PLANT YOUR SEEDS



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