

# Tomato Growing & Care Guide for Boise and Treasure Valley Gardens

*A local gardening guide from Five Mile Farm & Greenhouses  
Boise, Idaho*

Tomatoes grow very well in Boise and throughout the Treasure Valley when planted in full sun and fertile, well-drained soil. With proper watering, support, and feeding, tomato plants can produce abundant harvests from mid-summer until fall frost.

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## **PLANTING**

Tomatoes grow best in full sun and warm soil. Wait to plant outdoors until the danger of frost has passed and nighttime temperatures consistently stay above 45–50°F.

Space plants about **18–24 inches apart** with **3–4 feet between rows**.

When planting, remove the lower leaves and bury part of the stem below the soil surface. Tomatoes will form additional roots along the buried stem, helping plants develop stronger root systems.

Adding compost or a balanced vegetable fertilizer at planting time will help promote healthy growth.

## **SUPPORTING PLANTS**

Most tomato varieties benefit from support to keep fruit off the ground and improve air circulation.

Use **tomato cages, stakes, or trellises** to support plants as they grow. Install supports at planting time to avoid damaging roots later in the season.

Indeterminate varieties (those that continue growing and producing all season) especially benefit from staking or caging.

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Five Mile Farm & Greenhouses  
Boise's Local Garden Center Since 1983  
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## **WATERING**

Tomatoes prefer **deep, consistent watering** rather than frequent light watering.

Water at the base of the plant to help reduce the risk of disease

During hot Treasure Valley summer weather, tomatoes may need water **two to three times per week** depending on soil type and temperatures. Keeping the soil evenly moist helps prevent problems such as blossom end rot and cracked fruit.

Applying mulch around plants can help retain moisture and regulate soil temperature.

## **FERTILIZING**

Tomatoes benefit from regular feeding throughout the growing season.

A balanced vegetable fertilizer can be applied every **3–4 weeks** once plants begin actively growing. Avoid over-fertilizing with high-nitrogen fertilizers, which can produce large leafy plants with fewer tomatoes.

Compost or organic fertilizers are excellent options for maintaining healthy soil and steady plant growth.

## **HARVESTING**

Tomatoes are ready to harvest when they reach their full color and feel slightly firm but give gently when pressed.

Pick fruit regularly to encourage continued harvests. Many varieties will continue producing until the first fall frost.

If frost threatens late in the season, mature green tomatoes can be harvested and allowed to ripen indoors at room temperature.

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