

SUNDAYS

GARDENING



Time to think about gardening

Get those seeds ready, because spring planting is approaching

By Linden Staciokas
FOR THE NEWS-MINER

This seed starting chart is a general guideline based on our traditional Memorial Day weekend transplanting time — the holiday falls on May 28 this year. The planting date for your plot may vary depending on your location, slope and shading. We recently have had more years where May's temperatures have been exceptionally warm, so increasing numbers of Interior gardeners are transplanting mid-May or even earlier.

You can use this chart no matter when you intend to set out your seedlings. To find the right date for seed starting (if you don't want to wait until Memorial Day), locate the herb, vegetable or flower you want to start and count back however many weeks are listed in parentheses. As an example, according to this chart, artichokes that will be set in the garden at the end of May should be started around March 28. However, if you intend to plant them outside on May 15, counting back the 10 weeks listed in parentheses will bring you to March 4 as a good seed starting date for a mid-May

transplanting. These dates are not absolutes; a week either direction won't make much difference (assuming we have suitable weather conditions). Keep in mind that spring soil temperatures will be colder than air temperatures, and the dirt in a raised bed or dirt covered in plastic will be warmer than ground level soil. You may be more than ready to stick your hands in the soil in early May, but putting transplants out too early can cause them to set back rather than flourish. The same varieties put out a week later, when the ground has warmed up more, can end

up outpacing the plants that went into the garden a week earlier. Again, this year, I urge you to develop your own seed starting chart, one designed with your garden conditions in mind. You will find it far more useful than the generic charts put out by me or local nurseries. It is not difficult, nor does it take a lot of time. If at transplant time you feel a flower, vegetable or herb is smaller or larger than is optimum, note that and change this chart so that next year you remember to sow the seeds of that variety earlier or later. Finally, if you do not

have the space or proper lighting set up to ensure that seedlings grow to be stocky and sturdy (and, no, just using window lighting is not sufficient), then save yourself money and aggravation by purchasing your starts from one of our local nurseries. Ditto if you have failed year after year to bring a certain seed to life. It took me about five summers to concede, but I have been a lot happier since I admitted defeat and started buying my petunia starts. Linden Staciokas has gardened in the Interior for more than two decades. Send gardening questions to her at dorking@acsalaska.net.



FLOWERS

FEBRUARY 25

(13 weeks to setting out)

Tuberous Begonias

MARCH 4

(12 weeks to setting out)

Geraniums
Perk up last year's
Fuchsias, Hydrangeas, and Roses
Petunias for baskets
Wax Begonias

MARCH 11

(11 weeks to setting out)

Dahlia tubers
Fibrous Begonias
Gazania
Lobelia
Portulaca

MARCH 18

(10 weeks to setting out)

Impatiens
Rhodochiton (Purple Bell Vine)

MARCH 25

(9 weeks to setting out)

Anemones
Coleus
Lupine
Pansy and other members of the Viola family
Petunias
Phlox
Ranunculus
Snapdragons

APRIL 1

(8 weeks to setting out)

Ageratum (Floss Flower)
Asperula
Bells of Ireland
Carnations
Daisies
Delphiniums
Dusty Miller
Feverfew
Godetia
Kochia
Malope
Malva
Poppies (for early bloom)
Salpiglossis
(Velvet Flower, Painted Tongue)
Statice
Verbena

APRIL 8

(7 weeks to setting out)

Alyssum
Asarina

APRIL 8 (continued)

(7 weeks to setting out)

Asters
Black-eyed Susan Vine
Calendula
Candytuft
Celosia
Nemesia
Nicotiana (Flowering tobacco)
Potentilla
Salvia
Schizanthus (Butterfly flower)

APRIL 15

(6 weeks to setting out)

Baby's Breath
Dianthus
Forget-me-nots
Lavatera
Linaria (Toadflax)
Marigold
Mimulus (Monkey Flower)
Rudbeckia
Strawflowers
Sweet Peas
Sweet William
Ursina

APRIL 22

(5 weeks to setting out)

Bachelor Buttons (for early bloom)
Canary Bird Vine
Clarkia
Cosmos
Gypsophila
Hollyhocks
Larkspur
Morning Glory
Nasturtiums (for early bloom)
Stock
Zinnias

APRIL 29

(4 weeks to setting out)

Gladiola bulbs
Mignonette
Nemophila
Scarlet Runner Beans (for early bloom)
Sunflowers

MAY 13 TO 27

Direct Seed:

Bachelor Buttons
Nasturtiums
Poppies
Scarlet Runner Beans

February							March							April							May								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
				1	2	3					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7					1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
25	26	27	28				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31				

VEGETABLES AND HERBS

MARCH 18

(10 weeks to setting out)

Artichokes
Celery
Chives
Cilantro
Leeks
Peppers (for greenhouse in mid May)
Rosemary
Tomato (for greenhouse in mid May)

MARCH 25

(9 weeks to setting out)

Anise Hyssop
Arugula
Eggplant (for greenhouse in mid May)
Mint
Onion seeds (not sets)
Peppers (for outdoors)
Thyme (common, creeping & lemon)

APRIL 1

(8 weeks to setting out)

Bee Balm

APRIL 1 (continued)

Lovage
O-S Cross Cabbage
Oregano
Parsley (curled & flat leaf)
Sweet Marjoram
Tomato (outdoor)

APRIL 8

(7 weeks to setting out)

Cucumber (for greenhouse in mid May)
Eggplant (for outdoor)
Lemon Balm
Okra
Sage
Savory, Summer
Savory, Winter

APRIL 15

(6 weeks to setting out)

Basil (for early harvest)
Borage
Brussel sprouts
Dill (for early harvest)

APRIL 15 (continued)

Fennel
Kale
Mitsuba
Oregano (for early harvest)
Sorrel

APRIL 22

(5 weeks to setting out)

Broccoli
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Cucumber (outdoor)
Kohlrabi
Lettuce, head
Squash, Summer (including zucchini)
Squash, Winter (including pumpkins)
Swiss Chard

APRIL 29

(4 weeks to setting out)

Corn (if you want to transplant and not direct seed)
Lettuce, Leaf

MAY 13 TO MEMORIAL DAY

(Direct seed, weather permitting)

Arugula
Beans
Beets
Cabbage, Nabana flowering
Carrots
Chervil
Cilantro
Corn (under plastic)
Dill
Fennel
Kale
Lettuce, leaf
Mesclun
Onion sets
Oregano
Pak choy
Parsnip
Peas
Potato
Radish
Rutabagas
Spinach
Swiss Chard
Turnips

