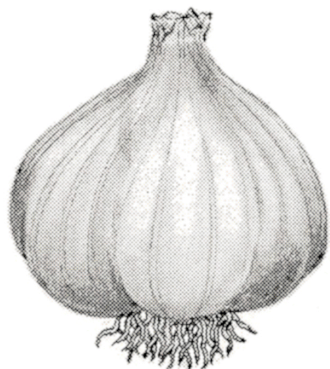


# ✧ Renee's Garden ✧

Set The Table From Your Garden

[www.reneesgarden.com](http://www.reneesgarden.com)

## GARLIC & SHALLOT GROWING GUIDE



**When to Plant** In mild winter areas, where the ground does not freeze hard, plant garlic anytime between mid-October to mid-November. In very cold winter areas with prolonged hard frost, plant about 1 month before the ground freezes.

**Soil Preparation** Choose a garden spot with at least six hours of sun a day and well-drained soil; raised beds are ideal for growing garlic and shallots because they have excellent drainage. Remove any weeds and break up the soil well, incorporating several inches of organic material like well-rotted manure or finished compost to help give the soil good texture and added drainage. Work in a good granular fertilizer at the rate specified for vegetable crops. (There are many good organic fertilizers available in granular form, or you can use any standard vegetable food.)

**Planting** Separate each garlic bulb into individual cloves. Plant each clove 1½ inches deep with its tip pointing up, root end down. Plant the cloves 6 inches apart, spacing rows about 18 inches apart. After planting, water thoroughly, then water again only when soil is dry; good drainage is critical to good growth. Fall planted garlic establishes its root system underground before winter's coldest weather, then grows vigorously throughout spring. In cold northern areas, cover garlic with 4-6 inches of a lightweight mulch like straw after planting to protect it over the winter. Remove the mulch in early spring.

**Growing Notes** In spring, plan to feed your garlic monthly during the active growing season using any good well-balanced fertilizer at the rate recommended on the package. Keep your garlic patch well weeded as it doesn't like competition. Garlic grows fast and best when supplied with about 1 inch of water per week, so where rainfall is sparse or in dry summer areas, plan on irrigating regularly.

If your garlic tops send up flower stalks, (called scapes), it's best to cut them off because you want to redirect energy into growing big bulbs underground. (The stalks are edible and some people enjoy using them in the kitchen, but they are strong tasting.) In early summer, the plants mature and the green tops will begin to turn brown, dry out and fall over. Stop watering at this point and wait about a week, then check a few garlic heads in the ground by scraping away the dirt. You want to make sure that the heads have reached a good size and that individual cloves are securely wrapped in their papery skins before harvesting.

**Harvest and Curing** Use a spading fork or a flat, narrow bladed shovel to carefully loosen the ground around the garlic, then pull each one out by hand. Trim the roots to ¼ - ½ inch and brush off clinging soil and debris.

Let your freshly harvested heads dry and cure for storage out of the sun, choosing a cool shady area with good air circulation. Cure them for at least 3 weeks – 4 is even better. If you live in a very humid climate, make sure have the very best air circulation you can offer. Curing your garlic is a very critical step because it really improves both flavor and storage time. If you want to make garlic braids, (all softneck varieties braid well, while hardneck varieties send up a stiff stalk and are difficult to braid) do it very soon after harvest while the leaves are pliable. Then be sure to hang the finished braids to cure as above. ~over~

**Storage** For best results, store your cured garlic in a cool and dry place (45 to 50°F would be ideal) and don't stack the heads over 4 inches deep.

With good storage conditions, you can expect about 6-8 months for softneck garlic varieties, 3-4 months for hardneck garlic and shallots.

Flavor is affected by heat – garlic grown in hot, dry conditions will be stronger tasting.

**What about Green Garlic?** “Green garlic” is simply the young garlic tops harvested early for their tender complex flavor. Because you are cutting them from the parent clove before it forms a full head in the ground, if you do choose to harvest green garlic, the plant will not regrow to produce a full head. Green garlic is really a delicious treat, so it's probably worth sacrificing a few heads! Try the green garlic wherever you want a mild but distinctive garlic flavoring in cooking. It's particularly tasty in sautés, salads, rice or pasta dishes.

### SHALLOTS

Plant as above for garlic, but note that good drainage is really essential with shallots because they are quite susceptible to rot. If your soil is heavy clay, make sure you amend it with organic material to improve drainage before planting.

Shallots grow similarly to garlic, forming a big loose cluster of new shallots around each planted mother bulb. Once the green shallot tops yellow and begin to dry out, you harvest the whole cluster, just like you harvest garlic. Delicious gourmet French Grey shallots will store for 3 to 4 months, if you keep them cool and dry. (See garlic storage information above).



### ***BASIC RECIPE FOR ROASTED GARLIC***

*Roasted garlic has a creamy texture and nutty mild flavor that everyone will love.*

*Important: preheat oven to 350 degrees*

*To roast whole garlic bulbs, slice the tips off each clove, but do not pull the bulbs apart. Place the garlic bulbs in a glass baking dish with 2 to 3 tablespoons of olive oil in the bottom. Drizzle more olive oil over the tops of each clove.*

*Roast the garlic bulbs for 30 to 45 minutes or until soft. Cool slightly and squeeze the roasted garlic out of the skins and spread it onto thinly sliced and lightly toasted French bread or crackers. Plan to use one bulb for every two people. Makes a great appetizer or snack.*



© Renee's Garden

Email: [customerservice@reeneesgarden.com](mailto:customerservice@reeneesgarden.com)  
6060 Graham Hill Road, Felton, CA 95018 ✦ Phone: 888-880-7228 ✦ Fax: 831-335-7227