



SHEGROWS

LAVENDER

GUIDE

FALL IN LOVE WITH LAVENDER

Lavender is a versatile plant consisting of many different varieties--some are used therapeutically in spas, and others for scrubbing your bathtub. While the word lavender may describe a color, not all lavender is purple. Just as roses come in an array of colors, lavender comes in different colors, shapes, and sizes.

In the landscape, lavender can be used as a hedge or an accent. During the winter it's trimmed into a small mound where it sits all year until spring, when it starts to send up long spikes. During July, when spring flowers have dwindled and summer flowers are just starting, lavender hits its stride along with the summer heat. When lavender is in full bloom it is truly captivating.

Lavender is native to the Mediterranean, which is why the largest production in the world comes from southern France. The United States is still in its lavender infancy, leaving a lot of room for creativity for both individual and commercial growers.

In this guide I share how to prep your soil, plant, grow, and harvest your lavender. I'll also share some of the varieties I've grown and how I use them. I hope this guide helps you fall in love with lavender as much as I have.



AT-A-GLANCE GROWING TIPS

- Pick a lavender for your growing zone
- Amend your soil for good drainage
- Water deep, long, and let dry out
- Make sure you harvest
- Trim in spring



HOW TO PERENNIALIZE

Lavender is part of the mint family and has 45+ species with hundreds of cultivars. The most commonly known species are *L. Angustifolia* (English), *L. Intermedia* (French), *L. Dentata* (Spanish), and *L. Stoechas*. In Colorado's growing zone of 5, we can only grow cold hardy *L. Angustifolia* and *L. Intermedia*. When grown correctly, lavender is a short lived perennial woody shrub that can produce fragrant blooms for 10 to 15+ years.

Three things to consider when choosing a variety:

1. Zone - Cold hardiness
2. Use - Landscape, Craft, or Cooking
3. Size - How much space do you have



HOW TO PREPARE SOIL

Lavender likes well draining soil, high in calcium, with a neutral pH. Consider mounding beds to improve drainage, add gypsum or other calcium (egg shells, oyster shells, etc.), and organic matter like peat moss or coco coir.



HOW TO GROW

Lavender should never be grown from seed if you want the variety to be true to the mother plant. Purchase transplants or take softwood cuttings from an existing plant and propagating it yourself.

Plant 2" pots of lavender in the spring once all threat of frost has passed. Space plants 30" apart for English varieties and 36" apart for French varieties.

Lavender does not like wet feet so plants should be irrigated slow and deep, then allowed to dry out. Drip irrigation is best with periods of drying out between each soak. We use one gallon drip emitters and water for 4 hours, once every 2 weeks on established plants.



HOW TO HARVEST

Blooms are ready to harvest when 1/4 of the buds are open. Harvest by hand with a sickle by taking a large handful of spikes in one hand then use the sickle in the other hand to cut 1-2" above the woody stems. Each bundle should be have about 150 stems.

HOW TO USE

1. USE LAVENDER OIL & BUDS

- To reduce anxiety and depression, place a drop of oil on your temple.
- Add a few drops in athletes foot, eczema, and acne creams to enhance healing qualities.
- Mix it with shampoo to kill lice and lice eggs.

2. COOK WITH LAVENDER

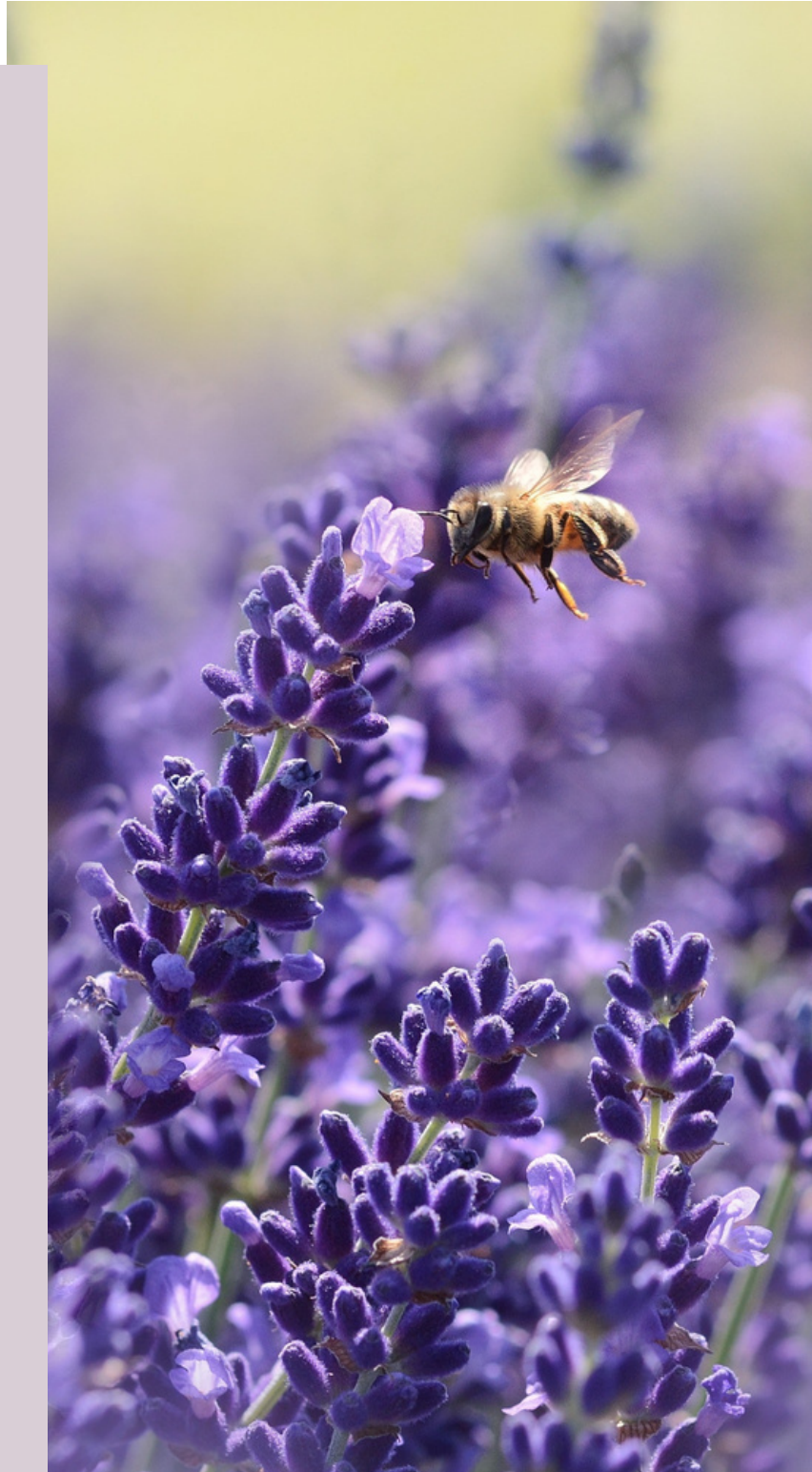
Make lavender lemonade (see recipe at the end of this guide) or try some lavender infused honey -- add lavender buds to a jar of honey (1/2 cup of buds per 4 cups of honey) and let steep for 2 weeks. Strain out buds and use the infused honey over toast, yogurt, or ice cream.

3. MAKE A DECORATIVE LAVENDER WREATH

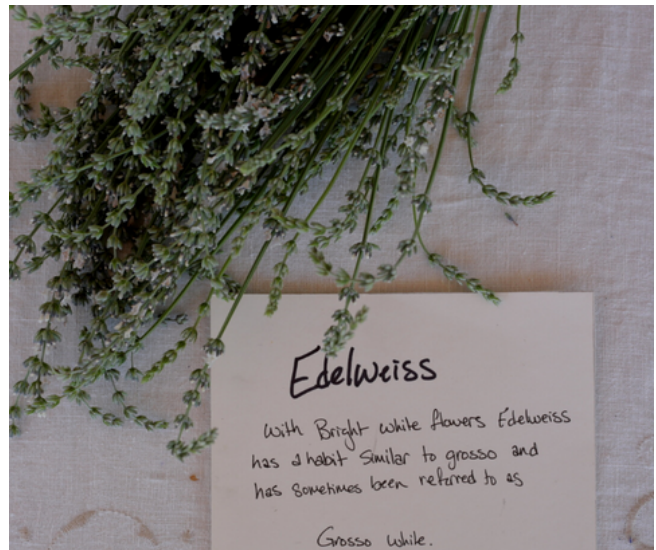
Lavender wreaths look stunning all season long. Not only do they hold their color and fragrance well, but they are a beautiful way to soften a room.

4. MAKE A LAVENDER WAND

Lavender wands are wonderful because they keep all the dried lavender buds enclosed in their stems. This way you can enjoy the scent without making a mess of buds. Use them in your closet to deter moths, hang in your car as a natural freshener, or give them as unique gifts.



FAVORITE VARIETIES





INGREDIENTS

- 1 small handful freshly picked and rinsed lavender flowers
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 1/2 cups freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 cups cold water, plus more as needed
- Ice
- Thinly sliced lemons and a few lavender springs, optional for garnish

Lavender Lemonade

1. Cut the lavender flowers from the stems and place in a medium bowl. Pour the sugar over the flowers and use your fingers to gently rub the flowers into the sugar.
2. Pour 2 cups of boiling water over the lavender sugar and stir with a spoon until the sugar has melted. Cover and let infuse for 30 minutes or up to several hours.
3. Strain the lavender-infused simple syrup and pour into a serving carafe or pitcher.
4. Stir in the lemon juice. Add another 2 cups of cold water. Taste and adjust for tartness. Add more lemon juice if too sweet. Add more sugar if too tart. Add ice and more water as desired.
5. Add some thinly sliced lemons and a few lavender sprigs to the serving pitcher for presentation.

For more information on lavender, visit our blog at shegrows.com.