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6 Tips to get your garden plants off to a good start

1. **Harden off your seedlings before planting**
 Bring seedlings outdoors and gradually expose them to the cold, wind and sun. Acclimatizing your plants to the sun may be less intuitive than acclimatizing them to the cold but it is equally important if they have spent time indoors (even just a week). Otherwise the sudden shock of full sun exposure can give them a sunburn!
2. **On planting day, minimize exposure to extreme weather**
 Don't plant during a windstorm or just before a frost. An overcast day is best. If planting on a hot day wait until afternoon in order to minimize exposure to midday heat.
3. **Plant at the right depth**
 In general, plant seedlings at about the depth they were at in the container. In cool, damp weather, planting too deeply can cause the stem to rot. The exception is tomatoes! Plant your tomatoes up to the first set of true leaves (or even deeper) for a strong, productive tomato plant.
4. **Don't tickle the cucumber's toes**
 Cucumber, zucchini, melon, squash and pumpkin all have sensitive root systems. Handle them gently. Do not divide them if there are 2 plants together in a pot.
5. **Water enough but not too much**
 Give each seedling a thorough watering at planting time. Once established, plants need about 1" of water per week. Place a container in your garden to measure rainfall. In dry weather, water 2-3 times per week.
6. **Wait...**
 Depending on the weather, it can take a week or more for plants to get established. Don't despair if your plant looks unwell in the first few days. Once established, the new growth will be green and healthy.

Plant Spacing Chart

Crop	Plant Spacing	Row Spacing
Basil	6-12" (15-30cm)	1-2' (30-60cm)
Cucumber (groups of 1-2)	12-24" (30-60cm)	5' (1.5m)
Eggplant	18-24" (45-60cm)	2-3' (60-90cm)
Kale	9-12" (20-30cm)	1.5-2' (45-60cm)
Lettuce (full size)	8-12" (20-30cm)	1-1.5' (30-45cm)
Onion (groups of 3)	12" (30cm)	1.5' (0.5m)
Pepper	12-18" (30-45cm)	1.5-3' (0.5-1m)
Squash (groups of 1-2)	24-36" (60-90cm)	5-10' (1.5-3m)
Tomato (indeterminate)	24" (60cm)	5' (1.5m)
Tomato (determinate)	18" (45cm)	5' (1.5m)
Zucchini	18" (45cm)	5' (1.5m)