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[Home](#) » [Plants & Animals](#) » [Perennials](#) » [Growing Figs: Annual Care, Tasty Varieties, and Helpful Resources](#)

Growing Figs: Annual Care, Tasty Varieties, and Helpful Resources

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[Jan 8, 1999](#)

Figs are great for a small garden. They take up little space, are easy to care for, and produce some of the most delicious fruit.

Best Conditions for Growing Figs

- Fig wood is hardy to -15 degrees Celcius, growable in areas as cold as zone 8 with little protection.
- Figs like lots of sun to ripen; plant your figs against a south-facing wall. A microclimate that allows warm air to sit in a pocket in your garden is excellent fig-growing territory.
- Figs only need minimal pruning. For pruning tips, see [here](#).
- Provide excellent drainage. Too much water at the roots can make the fruits split.
- Figs can grow in poor sandy mixes. Providing broken pot shards or stones under the roots will help restrain the growth, resulting in a dwarf and highly productive tree.



Annual Care for the Fig Tree

In early spring, the fruits will form on the branches before they flower. By May, the tree has fully leafed out. Be careful; fussing with its branches can cause the young fruit buds to drop. The fruits may start dropping by June. This is normal but can cause quite a mess; wasps may also be attracted.

By July the fruits are ripening. The holes at the end of the fruit will open slightly. Figs may also change colour depending on variety.

Some varieties have a trickle of sap that attracts pollinators such as ants and wasps; however, garden figs are self-pollinating.

The second crop grows on wood produced this year. It will ripen unaided if your temperatures stay above 15 degrees C for a few months. An indian summer can help this process along, but most enthusiastic fig growers do one of the following:

- Drape a make-shift greenhouse over the entire tree. This can be made of clear plastic, a light-coloured tarpaulin, or corrugated fibreglass sheets.
- Put a paper bag over each developing fig. Tedious, but works well.

Dealing with Pests when the Figs Ripen

Birds are the most common pest. Fishing nets work well. Nets can also help keep racoons out, but they must be very strong nets tightly wrapped.

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Common Fig Varieties

Adriatic (Fragola, Strawberry Fig, Verdone, White Adriatic) - From central Italy, small to medium, skin greenish, flesh strawberry colored. Good, all-purpose fig, but no good in mild-summer areas. Large vigorous tree leaves out early; subject to frost damage. Prune hard to force new growth.



Go To Page: 1 [2](#) [3](#)

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147. Feb 14, 2003 5:50 PM

I have a solarium in which I would like to grow some potted figs. In local greenhouses I have only ever seen the one variety being offered and that being Brown Turkey. Though, requesting others no pla ...

-- posted by Twrosz

146. Oct 16, 2002 8:25 AM

In response to [message](#) posted by PaulandInese:

Hi,
If anybody has any small fig plants that they'd be willing to spare I'd certainly ap ...

-- posted by Roy15

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144. Oct 14, 2002 7:58 PM

In response to your question, I recommend that you either winter your figs in a dark closet or in a garage where they can go dormant. If they get both heat and light they will continue to be active d ...

-- posted by PaulandInese

145. Oct 14, 2002 8:09 PM

In response to your question, it would depend on where you live. For example, southern Ontario has many ethnic home gardeners that either grow them in containers and bring them into shelter for the w ...

-- posted by PaulandInese

143. Sep 25, 2001 3:58 PM

Due to the long and informative nature of this discussion, I've taken the most important points transferred them into article format.

[The ...](#)

-- posted by Jojo

For a complete listing of article comments, questions, and other discussions related to Jojo Sigurgeirson's [Perennials](#) topic, please visit the [Discussions page](#).



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