

MINT (*Mentha spp*)

TYPES OF MINT

Official species:

- Peppermint (*Mentha x piperita*)
- Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*)

Other species to try with these recipes:

- Orange Mint (*Mentha x piperita citrata*)
- Chocolate Mint
(*Mentha x piperita f. citrata* 'Chocolate')
- Pineapple Mint (*Mentha suaveolens*)

HARVESTING & PRESERVING

- Collect leaves after dew or rain has dried, and ideally before the plant starts flowering.
- Air dry:** spread single layer of leaves on screens or paper towels, OR hang small bundles upside down to dry; drying will take several days
- Dehydrator:** arrange leaves in a single layer on trays, 95 to 110° F for several hours, until completely dry
 - Store whole dried herbs in a closed paper bag or glass jar (out of sunlight) for 9 to 12 months.
 - Don't grind or crumble until you're ready to use, to keep the aroma from dissipating too soon.
- Freeze:** mint tea can be frozen for 3 to 6 months



BENEFITS

Mint is helpful for digestion and nausea, freshens breath, relieves pain & headaches.

Externally, it can be used to cool and soothe irritation from bug bites and sunburn.

The tincture or strong tea is a remedy for hiccups.

PRECAUTIONS

- This information doesn't apply to pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*), a member of the mint family that must be avoided when pregnant, and can be toxic if used improperly.
- Some people may find that mint aggravates their heartburn.

SEASON: Spring/Summer

USES

- Eat:** Nibble fresh leaves, freeze in ice cubes, make tea, garnish drinks.
- Vinegar:** 1/2 jar chopped leaves + apple cider vinegar to fill, cap with non-metallic lid, steep 2 to 3 weeks, strain. Use mint vinegar for hair rinse, baths, bug bites, household cleaning, fabric softener.
- Mint Sugar:** 1/3 cup sugar + 8 fresh mint leaves; blend in mini food processor, air dry overnight in single layer on wax paper. Use on toast or to sweeten tea.
- Mint Tincture:** 1 part finely chopped fresh leaves + 2 parts 100 proof vodka, infuse for 3 to 4 weeks. Strain. Use a few drops at a time for upset stomach, nausea, hiccups.
- Mint Iced Tea:** Fill a jar with fresh mint leaves. Add simmering hot water almost to top. Cover, steep 1 hour, move to fridge for several hours longer, strain, sweeten to taste, and pour over ice cubes.
- Mint Hot Tea:** 1 to 2 tsp dried mint leaves + 1 cup boiling water, steep 3 to 4 minutes, sweeten to taste.
- Infused oil:** 1 part freshly dried crumbled leaves covered with 2 parts oil. Use for salves, creams, soap, etc.