



Garlic should ideally be planted in the fall before the frost. The amount of time before depends on where you live. If you live in an area with a hard frost, it should be 6 to 8 weeks before the first expected frost date. This is the process we use. The soaks provide protection for the garlic from various fungal diseases and also give your garlic a boost of nutrition. Soaking can also sterilize the garlic and kill any bugs that may have found their way to your garlic.

First, separate the cloves of your garlic, but don't peel them.

Second, drain and then place the garlic into a container and cover with isopropyl alcohol (I've heard of others using hydrogen peroxide or vodka). Soak for 15 minutes and drain.

Third, in a container combine:

- 1 Gallon of lukewarm water
- 1 Tablespoon of fish fertilizer
- 1 Tablespoon of baking soda

Add your garlic to this mixture and soak, we usually soak in this mixture overnight and finish the planting process first thing in the morning (others recommend to soak for at least 15 minutes, up to several hours- but no more than 16 hours). Plant as soon as possible after this second soak.

Fourth, in your prepared beds, take a hoe and drag it along the length of the bed to create a row that's a few inches deep. Plant the cloves with the pointed side up, 6" apart, and cover with a couple of inches of soil.

Fifth, cover with a thick layer of mulch such as straw, hay, or leaves- to about 4" in depth for colder regions. Here in South Carolina we have been having a difficult time finding straw that has been combined well and one year we wondered if we had planted garlic or wheat! You will want to make sure you obtain straw (if you use straw) from a farm that has combined the seed out very well.

That sums up what we do, then we wait (and wait) until spring comes!

When it is nearing time to harvest, the garlic leaves start to die off from the bottom up. A good indicator of when it is time to harvest is when half of the leaves have died off, and half are still green. You don't want all of the leaves to be brown or the cloves might separate and the garlic won't store well.

When most of your crop has reached this stage, stop watering for at least a week so the soil can dry out a bit to prevent rot and make harvesting easier.

You might want to lightly dig into the soil around the bulb, being careful not to harm the garlic, and check its size without digging the whole thing up. Pat the soil back down if the bulb looks small, and wait a few days before you check again. If the bulb looks ready, then it is a good time to harvest.



To harvest, carefully loosen the soil around your bulbs and gently pull the garlic out from the base of its stem, at its neck. Remove any excess dirt that falls off easily, but do not wash your garlic or remove the bulb wrappers.

If you plan to eat your garlic right away, you can trim the leaves and roots so you can store them.

Damaged garlic bulbs that are still edible should be eaten first, because they will spoil sooner.

If you want to prepare your garlic for long-term storage, keep the leaves and roots intact while your crop cures.

Garlic should be cured in a dry, shady, and airy place after harvesting. This can be under a carport, in a garage, shed, maybe even under a tree as long as it stays dry.

The bulbs should be laid out in a way that will provide good air circulation. They will burn from the sun, which will cause deterioration, so it must be shady. You don't need to clean off the dirt, you can do that when you trim them, and washing them would make it more difficult for them to dry and could encourage rotting from being wet. Do not remove the leaves while it is drying, because these protect the bulb from contaminants which might spoil the garlic while it is drying.

After a month or so, the roots will be shriveled and dried up, and the leaves should be completely brown and dried. Trim the roots and stems (we use pruning shears). At this time you can remove any dirt and loose wrappers. Try not to remove too many wrappers and expose the cloves.

Put the cured garlic in a breathable container in a cool, dark, and dry place where it can be stored for several months.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need further clarification. Enjoy!