

Herb Chart

Herb and Form	Flavor	Use
<u>Basil</u> (fresh and dried leaves, ground)	Sweet, with clove-like pungent tang	Eggs, meats, pesto, salads, soups, stews, tomato dishes
Bay leaves (dried leaves, ground)	Pungent, aromatic	Meats, pickling, sauces, soups, stews, vegetables
Chervil (fresh and dried leaves)	More aromatic than parsley, slight anise flavor	Eggs, fish, salads, sauces, soups, stuffings
Chives (fresh, freeze-dried)	Onion-like	Appetizers, cream soups, eggs, garnish, salads
Dill weed (fresh, dried)	Pungent, tangy	Breads, cheeses, fish, salads, sauces, vegetables
Marjoram (fresh and dried leaves, ground)	Aromatic, with slightly bitter overtone	Cottage cheese, fish, lamb, poultry, sausages, soups, stews, stuffings, vegetables
<u>Mint</u> (fresh, dried)	Strong, sweet with cool aftertaste	Beverages, desserts, fish, lamb, sauces, soups
Oregano (fresh and dried leaves, ground)	Strong, aromatic with pleasantly bitter undertone	Cheese, eggs, fish, Italian dishes, meats, sauces, soups, vegetables
<u>Parsley</u> (fresh curly leaf, fresh Italian flat leaf, flakes)	Slightly peppery	Garnishes, herb mixtures, sauces, soups, stews, egg dishes
<u>Rosemary</u> (fresh and dried leaves)	Fresh, sweet flavor	Casseroles, fish, lamb, salads, seafood, soups, vegetables
Sage (fresh and dried leaves, ground)	Aromatic, slightly bitter	Fish, meats, poultry, salads, sausages, soups, stuffings
Savory (fresh and dried leaves, ground)	Aromatic, slightly pungent	Poultry, meats, salads, sauces, soups, stuffings, vegetables
Tarragon (fresh and dried leaves)	Piquant, anise-like	Eggs, meats, pickling, poultry, salads, sauces, tomatoes
<u>Thyme</u> (fresh and dried leaves, ground)	Aromatic, pungent	Chowders, fish, meats, poultry, stews, stuffings, tomato dishes

Preserving Herbs

The shelf life of many herbs is one to two years but this period is shorter when herbs are exposed to light, heat and open air. Herb leaves keep their flavor best when they are stored whole and crushed just before use. When herb seeds are to be used for cooking, the seeds should be stored whole and ground up as needed.

Bag Drying

To prepare plants for drying, remove blossoms from the herb plant and rinse the leaves on the stem in cold water to remove soil. Allow plants to drain on absorbent towels until dry. Then place the herbs in a paper bag and tie the stems. Leave 1 to 2 inches of the stems exposed. This allows the plant oil to flow from the stems to the leaves. Place the bag in a warm, dry location. In about one to two weeks, when the leaves become brittle, tap them free of the stems and the leaves will fall into the bag. Store leaves in an airtight container away from the light.

Tray Drying

Clean herbs as for bag drying but the heavy stalks can be discarded. Put the leafed stems one layer deep on a tray in a dark, ventilated room. Turn over the herbs occasionally for uniform drying. The leaves are ready for storage when they are dry and the stems are tough.

Microwave Drying

If you have a microwave oven, you can use it to dry herbs. Place the herbs between paper towels and set them on the rack. Close the door and turn the oven on a medium setting for about 2-3 minutes. Then check for dryness; the leaves should feel brittle and should crumble easily. If they are not done, turn the oven on for 30 seconds longer. Although this process actually cooks the herbs, the end product is just about the same as air drying. Store the dried herbs in closed containers.

Freezing Flavor

Herbs may also be frozen. Rinse herbs in cold water and blanch in boiling, unsalted water for 50 seconds. Cool quickly in ice water, package and freeze. Dill, parsley, chives and basil can be frozen without blanching.