

ALOE VERA

ASPHODELACEAE PLANT FAMILY

UNLOCKING ITS SECRETS



A NATURAL WONDER

ALL ABOUT ALOE VERA

- There are many types of Aloe, such as Aloe Hedgehog and Aloe Lace. **Only Aloe Vera has medicinal properties.**
- Aloe is a cactus-like plant that grows in hot, dry climates. It is grown in subtropical regions around the world, including the southern border areas of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.
- Clinical research suggests topical application of aloe gel may speed burn healing and reduce burn-related pain.
- Keep the aloe vera plant in a pot near a kitchen window for periodic use.

- Aloe is used topically (applied to the skin) and orally. Topical use of aloe is promoted for acne, psoriasis, lichen planus (a very itchy rash on the skin or in the mouth), burns, and skin damage from radiation therapy. Oral use of aloe is promoted for weight loss, diabetes, and inflammatory bowel disease.
- Two small studies suggest that topical application of aloe gel, in combination with other forms of treatment, may improve acne.



CARE TIPS

ALOE VERA

LIGHT

Medium to bright light. Aloe can survive in medium light areas but it will thrive in bright sunny areas. Put on a window sill or in your office with a grow light. You can also take it outside during the summer and bring back inside for the winter.

WATER

Once every 1-2 weeks, or when the top 2 inches of soil is dry. Some months during the winter, only water 1 or twice a month.

TIPS

Drought tolerant, making it a great plant if you forget to water regularly. A pot made from terra-cotta or similar porous material is recommended, as it will allow the soil to dry thoroughly between waterings and will also be heavy enough to keep the plant from tipping over.



5 WAYS TO USE

ALOE VERA

Burn + Irritation Relief

Immediately after a minor burn from a hot pan in the kitchen or a skin irritation (rash, bug bites, sunburn) you can apply pure aloe vera gel directly to the area. If you have chilled aloe vera on hand (from the refrigerator) even better.

Due to its anti-inflammatory properties, aloe vera shortens the time it takes for the skin to heal.

Sunburn Ice Cubes

Cut or squeeze the gel out of your aloe leaf and mix with a little bit of water. Pour into ice cube trays to freeze and rub on your sunburn for an instant cool relief!

Acne Face Cream

Use fresh aloe vera gel on your face after washing with water. You can use as a daily skin moisturizer. Aloe vera is an excellent, healing ingredient that calms skin and hydrates.

Hair Mask

Mix 3 Tbsp of aloe gel + 1 Tbsp of coconut oil. Apply the mixture to wet hair (focusing on the ends), then leave it on for 20-30 minutes under a towel or plastic cap.

Rinse with a mild shampoo or lukewarm water. Aloe vera helps hydrate and soften hair, while coconut oil and honey further nourish the scalp and restore a healthy shine to your hair. You can use this mask once a week, or more often if your hair is prone to dryness.

Aloe Vera Smoothie

Add a 1/2 cup of fresh aloe vera gel to a mix of berries, bananas, milk, or any other smoothie ingredients. Aloe is rich in vitamins, helps with digestive issues, has antioxidants that help strengthen the immune system, and has powerful anti-inflammatory properties.



HOW TO HARVEST

ALOE VERA

Work your way down one leaf at a time if you are using in small pieces. Aloe will “heal” over where you cut it so you can use again. New leaves come out of the center.

1. Use a sharp knife or scissors to cut one or more of the outermost, mature leaves as close to the base of the plant as possible.

2. Avoid removing more than one-third of the plant at once to ensure it can recover.

3. Cut the leaves at the base to encourage new leaves to grow in the center, as cut leaves will not regrow themselves.



1. Place the cut leaf with the sliced end facing down in a jar or container and let the yellow latex sap (aloin) drip out for about 10-15 minutes. This sap is a skin irritant and has a bitter taste.

2. Wash the leaf to remove any dirt.



1. Trim the spiky edges from the leaf with a knife.

2. Slice the leaf in half lengthwise or peel back the top and bottom skin layers to expose the clear, translucent gel inside.

3. Use a spoon or knife to gently scrape the gel from the leaf into a clean bowl.



STORING

ALOE VERA

- **Store fresh:** put the leaf in the refrigerator and cut off pieces of the leaf as needed, each time wrapping the end.
- If you're going to use the leaf up within 1-3 days, you can leave it out on the counter (if the temps aren't too warm).
- You could cut the leaf up into usable portions and store it in a glass container with a tight lid. You might find this to be a better way to store and use it.
- For long-term preservation, remove the gel and freeze it in an ice cube tray, then transfer the cubes to a freezer-safe bag or container.



DIVIDING & PROPAGATING

ALOE VERA



Mature aloe vera plants often produce offsets—plantlets, pups, or babies—that can be removed to produce an entirely new plant (a clone of the mother plant, technically).



1. Find where the offsets are attached to the mother plant and separate them using pruning shears, scissors, or a sharp knife. Leave at least an inch of stem on the offset.



2. Once detached, you may see roots already growing, great! You can also peel back and off 2-3 bottom leaves to expose nodes for new roots to grow. The bottom white part is where new roots start. Use rooting powder and place in new soil. Water thoroughly and then give it some time before watering again.

WATCH OUR VIDEO

LEARN MORE



Watch BuchwalterGreenhouse on Youtube for more plant tips and life at the greenhouse experience.