

EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

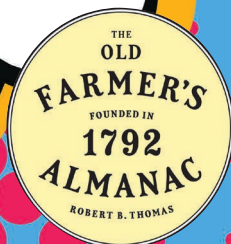
MAGNIFICENT, MULTIPURPOSE MINT!

PRIZEWINNING RECIPES

THE WONDERS OF BLUNDERS



OOPS!



MAY 2022

ILLUSTRATION: SQUAREDOT95/GETTY IMAGES

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See what we have in store for our June issue!



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MAY

Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More



EYE ON THE SKY

MAY'S FULL MOON NAMES

Flower Moon, Frog Moon,
Planting Moon

MOON PHASES

First Quarter: May 8, 8:21 P.M. EDT

Full Moon: May 16, 12:14 A.M. EDT

Last Quarter: May 22, 2:43 P.M. EDT

New Moon: May 30, 7:30 A.M. EDT



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MAY'S FULL MOON

MAY'S BIRTHSTONE: EMERALD

The emerald, a green type of beryl, ranges from light to rich green; the more saturated hues are more valuable, especially if pure- or blue-green. One of Cleopatra's favorite gems, the emerald has long been associated with fertility, rebirth, and love. Today, this gemstone signifies wisdom, growth, and patience.



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

May 5: Cinco de Mayo

May 8: Mother's Day

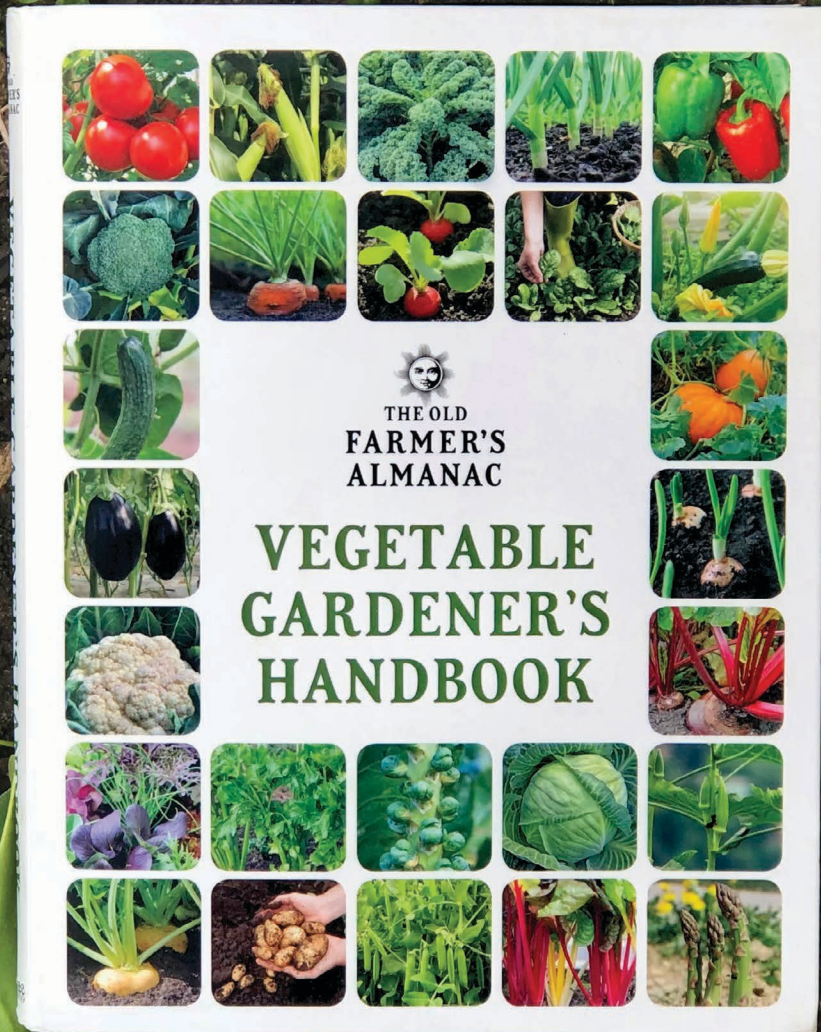
May 21: Armed Forces Day

May 22: National Maritime Day

May 23: Victoria Day (Canada)

May 30: Memorial Day

Created for new gardeners, green thumbs, and old hands alike!



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BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These May dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

AROUND THE HOUSE

Bake: 5, 6

Brew: 14, 15

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut:
22–24

Demolish: 14, 15

Dry fruit, vegetables, or meat:
25, 26

End projects: 30

Lay shingles: 7–9

Make jams or jellies: 22–24

Paint: 12, 13



Start projects: 1

Wash floors: 22–24

Wash windows: 25, 26

OUTDOORS

Begin logging: 18, 19

Go camping: 16, 17

Go fishing: 1–16, 30, 31

Set posts or pour concrete: 18, 19

IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 25, 26

Graft or pollinate: 5, 6

Harvest aboveground crops: 10, 11

Harvest belowground crops: 27, 28

Mow to promote growth: 14, 15

Mow to slow growth: 27, 28

Pick fruit: 10, 11

Plant aboveground crops: 5, 6

Plant belowground crops: 22–24

Prune to discourage growth: 25, 26

Prune to encourage growth: 7–9

ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 14, 15

Castrate animals: 20, 21

Cut hay: 25, 26

Purchase animals: 5, 6

Set eggs: 11–13, 21, 22

Slaughter livestock: 14, 15

Wean animals: 24, 29

PERSONAL

Advertise to sell: 14, 15

Ask for a loan: 27, 28

Begin diet to gain weight: 1, 11

Begin diet to lose weight: 24, 29

Buy a home: 14, 15

Color hair: 1, 27, 28

Cut hair to discourage growth:
27, 28

Cut hair to encourage growth:
12, 13

Entertain: 7–9

Get married: 12, 13

Have dental care: 10, 11

Move (house/household): 2–4,
29–31

Perm hair: 20, 21

Quit smoking: 24, 29

Straighten hair: 16, 17

Travel for pleasure: 7–9

Wean children: 24, 29



GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the May dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces, or Taurus

HARVEST: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS: Capricorn

CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED: Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

PRUNE: Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN MAY

1 Taurus	9 Leo	17 Sagittarius	25 Aries
2 Gemini	10 Virgo	18 Capricorn	26 Aries
3 Gemini	11 Virgo	19 Capricorn	27 Taurus
4 Gemini	12 Libra	20 Aquarius	28 Taurus
5 Cancer	13 Libra	21 Aquarius	29 Gemini
6 Cancer	14 Scorpio	22 Pisces	30 Gemini
7 Leo	15 Scorpio	23 Pisces	31 Gemini
8 Leo	16 Sagittarius	24 Pisces	



TAP FOR
MERCURY IN
RETROGRADE
DATES



TAP FOR
MAY MOON
PHASES

MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion *retrograde motion*.

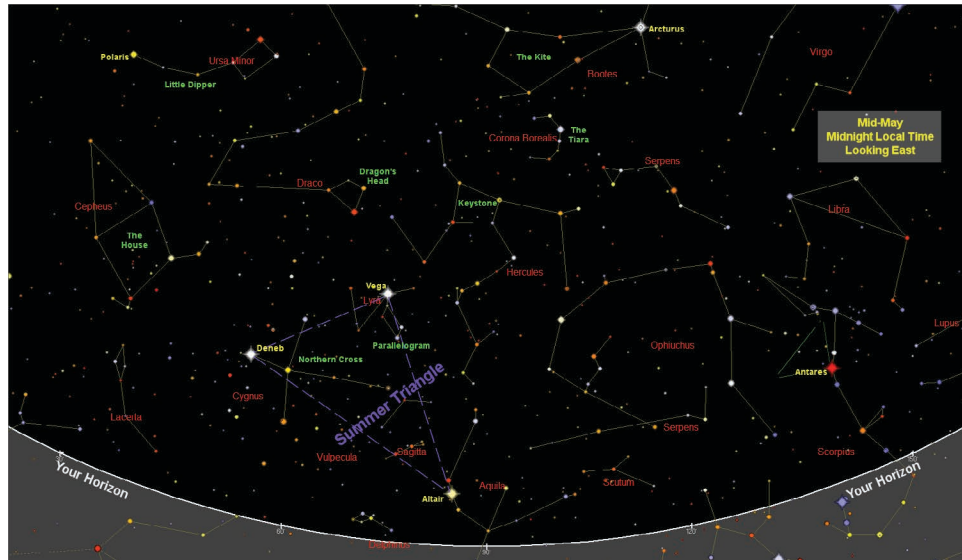
Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

Mercury's 2022 retrograde periods:
May 10–June 2, September 9–October 1,
and **December 28–(January 18, 2023).**

—Celeste Longacre

Celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2022, the best-selling Old Farmer's Almanac Gardening Calendar is filled with beautiful art, helpful tips, insightful quotes, and an easy-to-use grid with holidays and Moon phases. Order yours today at [Almanac.com/Shop](https://www.almanac.com/shop).



Mid-May
Midnight Local Time
Looking East

ALL ABOUT ASTERISMS

An asterism is an easily recognized star pattern that lies within a constellation. Unlike constellations, asterisms are entirely “unofficial.” There is no international organization or governing body that assigns names to asterisms. Their names have come into popular usage because they are a convenience—an easy way to navigate the sky. If you wish, feel free to identify and name your own asterisms. Who knows? Your names might catch on!

For a fine example of an asterism, look near the center of this month’s star map for the Keystone, a compact pattern of four stars that lies within the constellation Hercules, the Hero. Hercules is a sprawling constellation, the fifth largest in the sky, but the distinctive shape of the Keystone really stands out.

Above and to the right of the Keystone is the constellation Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown. To me, this semicircle

▶ TAP TO GET
A PRINTABLE
MAY SKY MAP

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DETRAY’S SKY
ADVENTURES



of stars looks far more like a tiara than a crown, so The Tiara it is, at least for me.

Higher in the sky lies Boötes, the Herdsman, whose main stars form an asterism known as The Kite. It's a sloppy-looking kite, to be sure, but the shape is certainly suggestive of one—enough so that it can help you to get your bearings and find Boötes. The bright star Arcturus anchors the tail of The Kite.

Off to the left, look for the Little Dipper asterism, part of the constellation Ursa Minor, the Lesser Bear. At the end of the dipper's handle is Polaris, the North Star. From brightly lit suburbs, you'll see only Polaris and the brighter stars of the dipper's bowl. Leave town to see the whole dipper.

Between the Little Dipper and The Kite slithers the body of Draco, the Dragon, which culminates in the Dragon's Head, a four-sided asterism that shows up well when viewed from a dark location.

Below the Dragon's Head, look for two very bright stars that point the way to a great pair of asterisms, one small and the other quite large.

The star Vega in the small constellation Lyra, the Lyre, achieved notoriety as home to the fictional aliens who sent a message to Earth in the 1997 Jodie Foster film *Contact*. Beneath Vega is a small but beautifully symmetrical asterism, the Parallelogram. Its exquisite and geometrically perfect shape is a wonder.

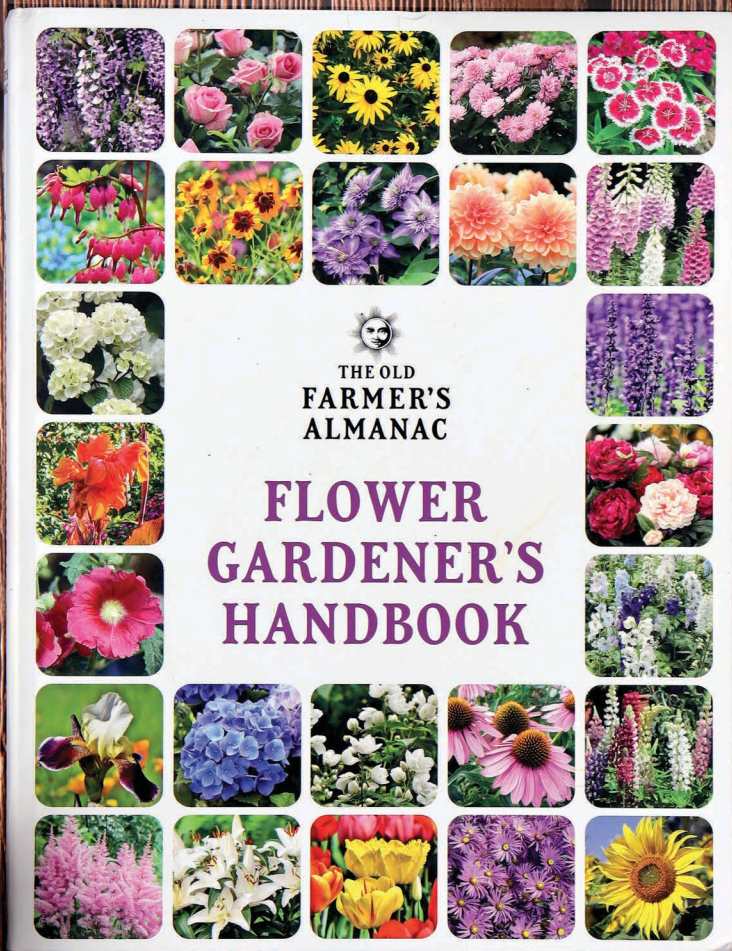
To the lower left is the bright star Deneb, marking the tip of the Northern Cross, which lies on its side at this time of year. Deneb and the Northern Cross are part of the large constellation Cygnus, the Swan. The name "Deneb" is derived from the Arabic word for "tail," and indeed Deneb sits at the tail of the Swan.

The left side of our sky map features The House, an asterism within the constellation Cepheus, the King. Yes, it's a lopsided house, but no more lopsided than the ones we all drew as children.

We've already mentioned that Vega and Deneb can help you to find two lovely asterisms. These two stars, plus brilliant Altair, comprise the three corners of the large asterism known as the Summer Triangle, marked in purple on our Sky Map. The Summer Triangle will be prominent in the sky from now well into autumn.

—Jeff DeTray

A Flowering Future



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AMUSEMENT



OOPS!

The Wonders of Blunders

Proof that some errors are not mistakes—just happy accidents.

ILLUSTRATION: SQUAREDOT95/GETTY IMAGES

**TO AVOID ALL MISTAKES IN THE CONDUCT OF GREAT
ENTERPRISES IS BEYOND MAN'S POWERS.**

—FABIUS MAXIMUS, ROMAN POLITICIAN (C. 275–203 B.C.)

Most people try to avoid making mistakes, yet psychologists say that learning from our mistakes can help us to lead happier lives. In fact, the history of innovation is filled with tales of goofs that turned into happy accidents, from penicillin (discovered when an experiment acquired bread mold) to Silly Putty (a failed attempt to invent artificial rubber), to name but two.

Make no mistake about this: You can learn how to benefit from your blunders. Take note of these five tips and timeless words of wisdom that can help us all to make successful errors.

**WHEN YOU DON'T
GET WHAT YOU
WANT, WANT WHAT
YOU GET.**

In the 1930s, DuPont chemist Roy Plunkett was trying to develop a better refrigerator. The chemical that he created to be a coolant failed to perform as expected; it was too slippery. Rather than throw it out, Plunkett considered other uses. Today, we know this chemical as a nonstick coating: Teflon.

You must make your own blunders, must cheerfully accept your own mistakes as part of the scheme of things.

—MINNIE FISKE, AMERICAN ACTRESS (1865–1932)

**TURN A PROBLEM
INTO A SOLUTION.**

In the late 1960s, scientists at 3M Company developed a glue to paste pieces of paper together. The sheets stuck, but they came apart easily, making the glue worthless—or so it was thought until later, when an employee named Art Fry used the fickle adhesive to make bookmarks. With that, the Post-it was born.

To make mistakes as we are on the way to knowledge is far more honorable than to escape making them through never having set out to seek knowledge.

—R. C. TRENCH, IRISH PRELATE (1807–86)



Oops!

REMEMBER THAT SOMETIMES ONE WRONG CAN MAKE TWO RIGHTS.

In 1856, while conducting experiments to find a cure for malaria, teenage lab assistant William Perkin found that one of his solutions dyed cloth. Fascinated by the failed antidote, he was inspired to sell it as a colorfast dye. This decision made him a rich man. (And years later, while using Perkin's dye to stain microscope slides, doctors did discover a malaria cure.)

Mistakes are often the best teachers.

—JAMES A. FROUDE, ENGLISH HISTORIAN (1818–94)

FOLLOW YOUR ERRORS WHERE THEY LEAD YOU.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus set out in search of a sea route to the Far East, but instead came upon America. Once, in the 1930s, while flying over the jungles of Venezuela in search of treasure below, bush pilot Jimmie Angel found the world's highest waterfall—a cataract known today as Angel Falls.

Mistakes are the portals of discovery.

—JAMES JOYCE, IRISH WRITER (1882–1941)

KEEP AN OPEN MIND.

Some of the world's leading firms pay their employees to conceive of products and services that don't—and won't—work. It's called brainstorming: setting no bounds on ideas and expectations as a way to stimulate thinking. Without the freedom of such a forum, the concepts of the bookseller without a bookstore (Amazon.com) and the warehouse as a store (Costco) might never have been developed.

Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.

—ALBERT EINSTEIN, AMERICAN PHYSICIST (1879–1955)

—Nick D'Alto



Prizewinning Recipes from the *Garden Guide*

Each year in The Old Farmer's Almanac Garden Guide, we invite our audience to enter our Reader Recipe Contest. Over the years, we've asked for your favorite recipes using tomatoes, strawberries, sweet potatoes, zucchini, and many other garden-fresh ingredients. Here you'll find winners from our recent contests to give you an idea of the range of delicious recipes that we receive. To learn more about our contests, go to Almanac.com.

FOOD

Stuffed Mashed Potatoes



PHOTO: BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER

STUFFED MASHED POTATOES

- 2 pounds russet potatoes
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 pound mozzarella cheese, cut into 12 pieces
- 3 ounces pepperoni, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons seasoned bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 400°F. Wash and prick potatoes and bake for about 35 minutes, or until they can be pierced with a fork. Leave oven on and grease a 12-cup muffin tin.

While potatoes are hot, peel them. Put through a ricer or shred with a grater.

In a bowl, combine potatoes, butter, salt, garlic powder, and pepper and mix until butter has melted.

Fill each muffin cup about halfway with potato mixture. Place one piece of mozzarella in each cup. Divide pepperoni evenly between cups and top with remaining potatoes. Sprinkle bread crumbs on top.

Return to oven and bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Unmold immediately and serve.

Makes 12 servings.

FOOD

Blueberry-Kidney Bean Salad With Fresh Vegetables



BLUEBERRY-KIDNEY BEAN SALAD WITH FRESH VEGETABLES

- 1 can (15.5 ounces) red kidney beans
- 1 sweet onion
- 1 medium tomato
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1-1/2 cups fresh blueberries
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 8 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon curry powder

Rinse and drain the kidney beans and place in a bowl.

Cut vegetables into bite-size pieces and add to the kidney beans. Stir in blueberries, feta, vinegar, olive oil, salt, black pepper, and curry powder. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving.

Makes 4 servings.

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FOOD

Papa's Sugar Pea and Veggie Medley



PAPA'S SUGAR PEA AND VEGGIE MEDLEY

- 3 cups fresh sugar snap peas
- 1/2 cup baby carrots, sliced
- vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup diced bell peppers
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 small zucchini, sliced
- 1 cup ham cubes
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 10 drops hot sauce
- garlic salt, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 egg, beaten
- 3 medium red potatoes, cooked and sliced
- 1/2 cup shredded Colby Jack cheese
- 1 cup spinach leaves

In a large pot of boiling water, blanch peas and carrots. Drain and set aside.

Coat the bottom of a 10- or 12-inch skillet with vegetable oil and warm over medium heat. Add mushrooms, bell peppers, onions, and zucchini and cook for 5 minutes. Add peas, carrots, and ham and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often. As mixture is stirred, add butter, hot sauce, garlic salt, and black pepper.

Pour egg over mixture. Fold in egg, potatoes, and cheese. Cover and cook on medium for 5 minutes.

Tear spinach into pieces and fold into mixture for final 2 minutes of cooking.

Makes 8 servings.



A Spicy Alphabet

*People have been trading and enjoying spices for centuries.
Some of their uses, both modern and ancient, may surprise you.*

• **Anise seeds** are used in baked goods and stews. In 1305, money collected from importing anise was used to pay for repairs to England's London Bridge.

• **Basil leaves** are used in tomato sauces, pesto, and Thai food. Ancient Greeks believed that basil brought bad luck. Ancient Romans believed that it symbolized love, as do modern Italians. Some cultures used it to cure scorpion bites and keep scorpions away.

• **Cinnamon**, from the dried inner bark of evergreen trees, is used in baked goods and Middle Eastern, Indian, and Southeast Asian cooking. Ancient Romans believed its fragrance to be sacred so burned it at funerals. Cinnamon sticks are called quills.

• **Dill** is used in pickling; cheese, meat, and

seafood dishes; baked goods; and dressings. Roman gladiators thought that it helped them to be better fighters. It was once given to babies to stop their crying.

THE MISNOMERED SPICE

Pumpkin pie spice contains no fruit or pie. It is a blend of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and allspice.

• **Estragon (aka tarragon) leaves** are used in sauces, mustard, meat and fish dishes, and soups. They were once believed to cure poisonous bites or the bites of mad dogs.

• **Fennel seeds** are used in fish, sausage, and curry dishes and in baked goods. Puritans called it "the meeting

seed" because they liked to chew the seeds during meetings. Today, it is used in India as a breath freshener.

• **Gingerroot** is used in baked goods and Indian cooking. Ginger ale was invented in England and Ireland in the 1800s, after people began sprinkling the root on top of beer.

• **Horseradish**, the root of the horseradish plant, is used in sauces. It thrives in potash-rich soil near St. Louis, Missouri, an area known as "the American bottoms" because it was carved out by glaciers eons ago.

• **Indian arrowroot**, a starch made from the *Maranta arundinacea* plant, is used as a thickener in cooking. Its name stems from its use in healing wounds from poisoned arrows. It was also used on scorpion

and black spider bites.

- **Juniper berries**, from the juniper shrub, are used in marinades, sauerkraut, sausage, soups, and stuffing. The berries did not grow in Egypt but have been found in ancient tombs there; they were used for making mummies.

- **Knotted marjoram's unopened flower buds** resemble knots. Dried flowers and leaves are used in meat dishes, stuffing, breads, and dressings. Ancient Greeks believed that if it were planted on a grave site, the deceased would be happy for eternity.

- **Lavender flowers** are used in baked goods. In 17th-century London, people sometimes wore lavender around their wrist in the belief that it would protect them from the Black Plague.

- **Mint leaves** are used in

drinks, sweets, and lamb dishes. Mice hate the scent of it! Some people use mint oil to try to get rid of them.

- **Nutmeg seeds**, ground, are used in sausages, meats, soups, desserts, and eggnog. Connecticut, officially called the Constitution State, is also nicknamed the Nutmeg State because—it is said—peddlers from there once sold folks to the south carved, wooden nutmegs instead of real ones.

- **Oregano leaves** are used in spaghetti sauces. The word “oregano” is Greek and means “joy of the mountain.” It was once used to cure the “sour humors” (bad moods) of elderly farmers.

- **Poppy seeds** are used in baked goods and dressings. In *The Wizard of Oz*, a field of poppies puts Dorothy to sleep.

The seeds symbolize sleep, and legend has it that poppy flowers grow where battles have been fought.

- **Quassia** is used to flavor baked goods, aperitifs, and soft drinks. Its intense bitter taste comes from the evergreen's bark and wood. It is also used for medicinal purposes as a digestive and to treat fevers. It was named after a former slave, botanist, and healer from Suriname, Graman Quassi, who is said to have discovered the medicinal purposes of the bark.

- **Rosemary leaves** are used in meat dishes. Ancient Greeks braided rosemary into their hair because they thought that this would boost their brain power.

- **Sesame seeds** are used in baked goods, dressings, candy, and

Middle Eastern, Asian, and Muslim cooking. They symbolize good luck. A drawing on a 4,000-year-old Egyptian tomb depicts a baker adding them to his dough.

- **Thyme leaves** are used in stuffing, meat and fish dishes, and “tussie-mussies”—bouquets of aromatic herbs and flowers tied together with a ribbon. In the Middle Ages, people wore the bouquets to cover bad smells and gain protection from disease.

- **Umbrella tree’s sweet, pandanus flowers** are used to flavor sweets and to make kewra water in northern India. In Southeast Asia, the leaves of a different species of pandanus are folded to make 3/4-inch boxes for sweets. On South Pacific islands, the fruit of yet another species resembles

pineapple and is a food source.

- **Vanilla’s dried beans, or pods**, are used in baked goods and sweets. In 1841,

THE MOST EXPENSIVE SPICE

Saffron comes from crocus flowers. Each crocus flower has three stigmas (sticky parts of the flower that pollen lands on). It takes 225,000 stigmas to make 1 pound of saffron. This is why saffron can cost up to \$5,000 per pound.

on Reunion Island, 12-year-old Edmond Albius discovered how to pollinate vanilla flowers by hand. His method is still used today.

- **White pepper**, from the same berry as black

pepper, is used in many ways. In the Middle Ages, Europeans often used pepper like money, to pay rent and taxes.

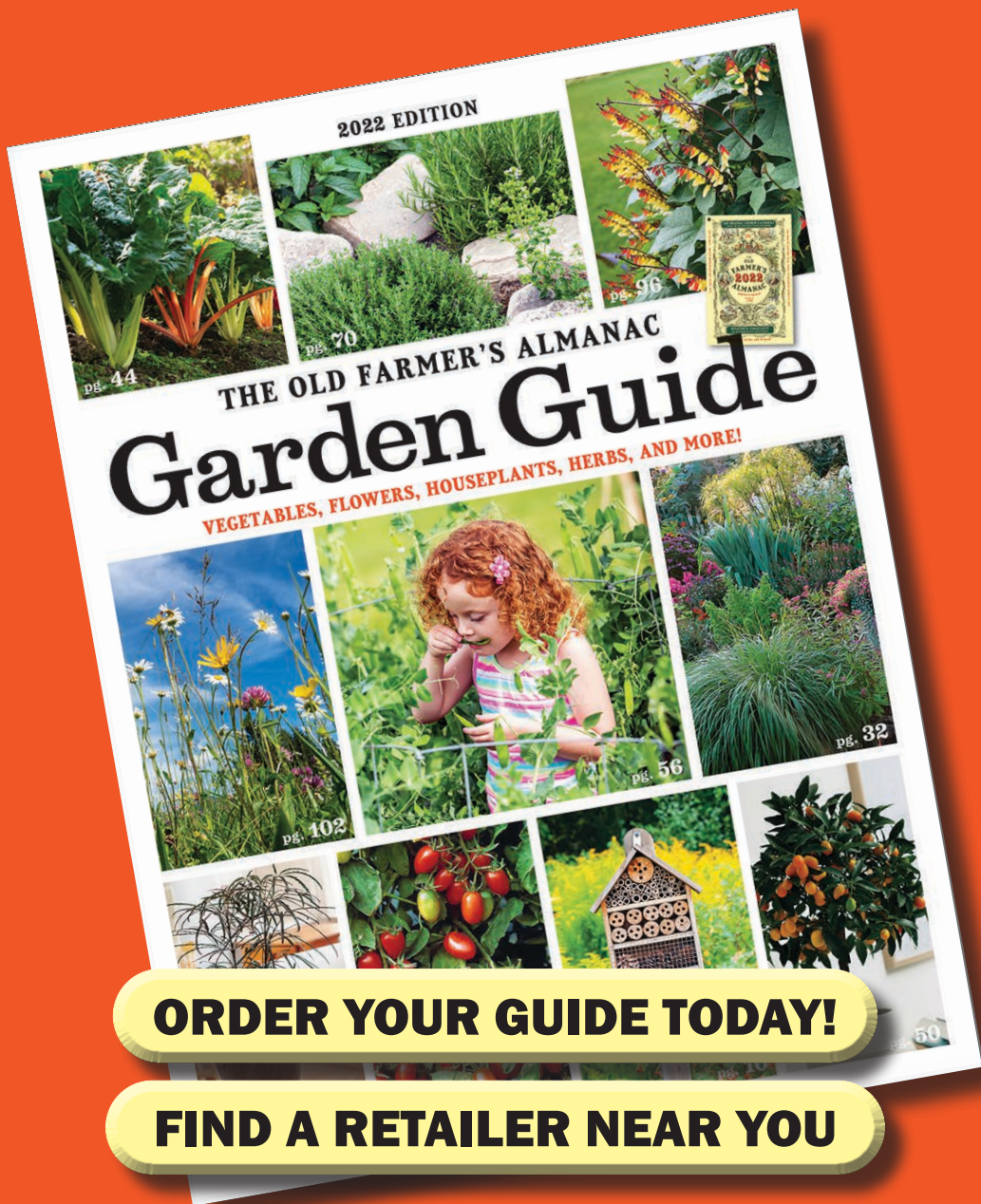
- **Xun sun is Mandarin Chinese for basil.** One species, *Perilla*, is used in stir fries and tempuras. It is believed to repel ticks if rubbed on skin and clothing.

- **Yellow julienne, the leaves of the rocket plant**, is used in salads. In France, people once believed that it cured laryngitis. Some people call it *herbe au chanvre* (cantor’s herb, or herb of high praise).

- **Zeller**, Hungarian for celery, is dried fruit from a plant related to the vegetable stalk and is used in breads, pickling, dressings, and soups. Celery was originally used as a medicine. Its first mention as food occurred in France in 1623.

—Alice Cary

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LIVING NATURALLY

Magnificent, Multipurpose Mint!

PHOTO: PIXABAY

LIVING NATURALLY

What do you know about the mint family, Lamiaceae?

The most common and popular mints for growing have traditionally been peppermint (*Mentha x piperita*), native spearmint (*M. spicata*), Scotch spearmint (*M. x gracilis*), and cornmint (*M. arvensis*); more recently, this list has grown to include apple mint (*M. suaveolens*).

Mint provides most of our common culinary herbs (e.g., basil, oregano, marjoram, rosemary, sage, thyme, and summer and winter savory).

Plus, there are dozens (perhaps hundreds) of traditional medicinal herbs, not to mention many aromatics for use in flavorings, perfumes, and cosmetics.

You'll also find mints among our favorite landscaping plants.

Think salvias, agastaches, and lavenders, bee balms, hyssop, and Russian sage. All summer long, they produce nectar-rich blossoms that attract bees and beneficial pollinators along with an occasional hummingbird.

Many, if not most, mint family members contain strongly aromatic oils (think lavender, rosemary, basil, thyme, and sage), which accounts for their many uses as seasonings, flavorings, and perfuming agents.

12 USES FOR MINT LEAVES

There are many safe uses for mint-family herbs besides beautifying your gardens. Here is just a sampling:

1. Food—Peppermints are especially good culinary mints, ideal for chopping into salads, sprinkling over fruit, or combining with basil or

cilantro to make mint pesto. We like to add a couple tablespoons of fresh chopped mint to peas, green beans, carrots, cauliflower, or zucchini to create minted vegetables!

2. Drinks—Freeze a few trays of strong mint tea, then use the ice cubes for cooling summer drinks! Add mint leaves or cubes to mojitos, iced tea, or fresh lemonade.

3. Tea—Why buy mint tea when it's so easy to make? What we usually call the "mints" (peppermint, spearmint, apple mint, etc.) are traditional tea herbs. Just steep your fresh mint leaves in boiling water for about 5 minutes and serve. It's a great digestive aid after dinner. Apple mint is one of my favorites, with more mint flavor and less aftertaste.

4. Hair rinse—Add one part strong mint (especially rosemary) tea to one part cider vinegar

LIVING NATURALLY

for a conditioning rinse that you can either leave in or rinse out. The vinegary smell dissipates after drying.

5. Facial astringent—

Add a few finely minced leaves of fresh peppermint or other mint to a cup of witch hazel. Store in a glass jar for a week or more, shaking occasionally. Strain the herbs from the mixture after a week.

6. Mouthwash—Chop 1/4 cup of fresh mint, bee balm, lemon balm, basil, thyme, or oregano leaves and infuse in a quart of boiling water. When cool, strain the herbs and store in the refrigerator.

7. Mint bath—Steep a handful of mint leaves in a pint of hot water for about 10 minutes, then strain. Add to bathwater for an invigorating, stress-free soak.

8. Ease sunburn pain—Make a strong peppermint tea and

refrigerate the mixture for several hours. Gently apply to the burned area with cotton pads.

9. Breath freshener—

Just chew on a few mint leaves! Sage teas and extracts have been used for centuries as a mouthwash for oral infections. Don't use or chew mint-family herbs if you're breastfeeding, as even small amounts of sage and peppermint may reduce milk supply.

10. Scent up a space—

Keep your home smelling fresh by adding a few drops of mint essential oil to your favorite unscented cleaner or just take a cotton ball and dab onto a lightbulb.

11. Moth repellent/scented sachet—Tie a few branches of strongly scented mint (peppermint, sage, lavender, rosemary, bee balm) together or pull off a handful of leaves and stuff them

into the leg of an old nylon stocking. Suspend by a string inside a garment bag, tuck into bags of stored woolen clothing, or just place in your dresser drawers to let your clothes soak up the scent. Refresh periodically.

12. Bug repellent—

When ants come into the kitchen during the summer, placing a few stems of mint, gently crushed, near suspected entry points really does deter ants. You need to replace the mint with fresh material every few days. Also, keep pets flea-free by stuffing a small pillow with fresh spearmint and thyme and placing it near your pet's bed.

Of course, mint isn't used only to deter bugs; it also attracts beneficial insects and pollinators. Bees, butterflies, and hover flies love mint, which is rich in nectar and pollen.

LIVING NATURALLY

MEDICINAL USES OF MINT

Mint has long been viewed as an herbal remedy, easing queasy stomachs, calming stress and anxiety, and promoting restful sleep.

Peppermint tea is known to be an excellent way to ease an upset stomach, calming the digestive tract and alleviating indigestion, gas, and cramps.

Mint has also been used for centuries in traditional medicine.

Many—perhaps most—mints are also used for human and veterinary medicine, as insecticides or insect repellents, and as antifungal or antibacterial protection for crop plants.

Mints are potent plants, full of phytochemicals that plants manufacture to protect themselves against harmful bacteria, viruses, and

other assaults from the environments in which they evolved.

Interestingly, there are even studies showing that spearmint is beneficial to honeybees by cleaning out the mites that infect their hives.

... BUT ALWAYS BE SURE TO USE WITH CAUTION

If herbal medicine interests you, please approach the mints—especially their essential oils, tinctures, and concentrated extracts—with care.

This goes for both over-the-counter and homemade remedies.

Although many have been used by traditional healers around the world for centuries, most herbs haven't undergone rigorous testing for safety and efficacy, especially in pregnant/nursing women, children, elders, and people with chronic illnesses.

Seek out as much information as you can from books, online sources, and experienced herbalists in your area.

Inform your healthcare practitioner whenever you begin using an herbal remedy.

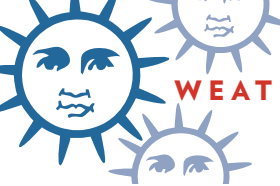
Most herbalists recommend staying away from ingesting essential oils as medicines unless you are under the care and observation of a medical provider experienced with herbal medicines.

Out of an abundance of caution, herbalists also urge pregnant and breast-feeding moms—as well as people with serious chronic diseases—to avoid using mint-family essential oils, even in massage oils.

—Margaret Boyles



TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG



A COLD MAY IS GOOD FOR CORN AND HAY.

HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Our forecasts are based on the tabulations that span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

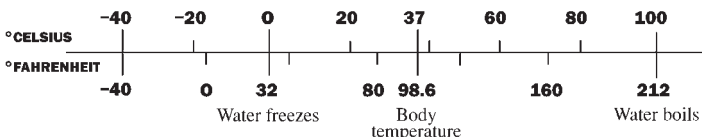


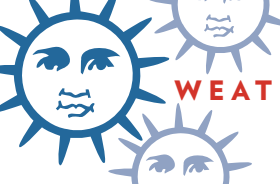
TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY



LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

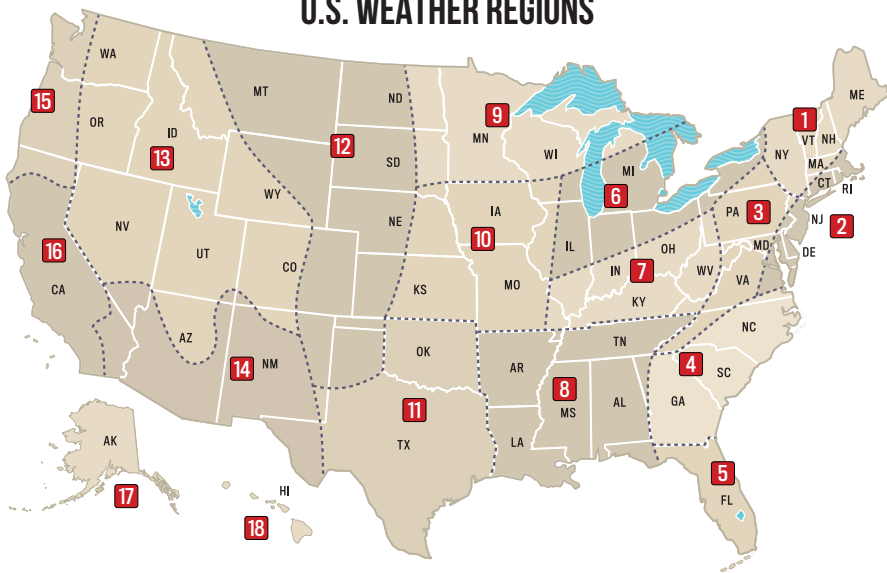
CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE





WEATHER FORECASTS

U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



CLICK HERE
TO FIND MAY
WEATHER
PREDICTIONS
FOR THE U.S.
AND CANADIAN
REGIONS





OLÉ, MAY!

On May 5—Cinco de Mayo—watch for some *chaparrones* (showers) across the Northeast, while the weather will be *soleado* (sunny) and *cálido* (warm) from the mid-Atlantic to the Southeast. *Lluvia* (rain) will fall across portions of Florida. Sunshine is expected from the Ohio Valley through the Midwest. Some *tormentas* (thunderstorms) will fire up across portions of the Plains. The western U.S. will generally be *fresco* (cool), with some showers. Spotty showers and even a few thunderstorms will move across much of Canada.

The Kentucky Derby will be run on the first Saturday in May—the 7th—at Churchill Downs in Louisville, and it’s looking like the weather will again be rosy for the 148th “Run for the Roses.” A cool day is on the way despite some sunshine, and the track should be “fast” for the third year in a row.

On Mother’s Day, May 8, Mom and her flowers will be basking in sunshine across much of the East due to early-season warmth, although cool, showery weather may persist in New England. The warm air will help to spark thunderstorms from the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley into the Upper Midwest. Rain pockets will linger across the Rockies and Northwest, while mothers across the Southwest will enjoy a sunny, comfortable day. Heavy rain will wet Mom’s hair in eastern Hawaii. Showers may pop up across central and eastern Canada, as well as some flurries out toward the Northwest Territories.



For Victoria Day in Canada on May 23, the weather looks cool and showery across the Maritimes, while there will be some breaks of sun along with the risk of spotty showers from Quebec through Ontario. Springtime thunderstorms will accompany mild weather in the Prairies, while showers impact northern and western parts of Canada.

Although we don't expect this Memorial Day weekend (May 28–30) to be as brisk as it was last year for much of the central and eastern U.S., it will be cool with some showers from New England through the Appalachians. Thunderstorms will help to usher in the unofficial start of summer across the East, especially across Florida. Generally drier weather is expected farther west across the Deep South and into portions of the Plains. Early-season heat will be raging across the interior Southwest, with a marine layer keeping it cooler near the coast. Even the Pacific Northwest will be on the warm side, with widespread sunshine. Some rounds of rain will move across Alaska and Hawaii.

In the month of May overall, temperatures will be above normal across much of the eastern two-thirds of the U.S. Most of these areas will see a drier-than-normal May, although portions of the mid-Atlantic and Southeast may buck this trend a bit. Across much of the West, the wet season will try to hold on longer as it turns out cooler than average from the Rockies to the West Coast, with near- or above-normal precipitation. Elsewhere, it looks like a warm May for Alaska and a wet one in Hawaii. Across Canada, it looks wet from the Prairies off to the north and west, while the weather will be somewhat drier and warmer than normal across Ontario and Quebec. Expect a wet May in the Maritimes, with near-normal temperatures.

The Atlantic hurricane season officially runs from June 1 through November 30, and we're coming off two very active years thanks in part to La Niña conditions in the Pacific. This 2022 season will feature near- or slightly above-average activity, with La Niña weakening. If this season's count does indeed end up above average, it would be the seventh straight above-average season in terms of the number of named storms. The best chance for a major hurricane strike will be in Georgia or the Carolinas in mid-September, with tropical storm threats in Texas from mid- to late June, the Southeast from mid- to late August, and the Deep South from mid- to late July and in late October.

—Michael Steinberg, *Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologist*



HUMOR ME

GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC



NO LAUGHING MATTER

Mark Twain once approached a businessman friend and confided to him that he needed the services of a stenographer.

“I can send you one, a fine young fellow,” the friend said. “He came to my office yesterday in search of a position, but I didn’t have an opening.”

“Has he a sense of

humor?” Twain asked cautiously.

“A sense of humor? Indeed, he has! In fact, he got off one or two witty things himself yesterday,” the friend hastened to assure



Twain.

“Sorry, but he won’t do, then. I had one once before with a sense of humor, and it interfered too much with the work. I can not afford to pay a man \$2 a day for laughing.”

NOT BUILT THAT WAY

Two big, burly men got onto a train in Harpers Ferry, where they proceeded to occupy well more than their fair share of a three-person bench.

At a stop outside Washington, what appeared to be a tall, cadaverous-looking, government bureaucrat with a briefcase boarded, only to find that the only available seat apparently was between the two travelers.

He tried to wedge himself between the two, who could not

seem to budge.

“See here,” the string bean said. “Surely you have room for me. And besides, according to an Act of Congress, each bench is constructed to allow for only 18 inches of space per person.”

“Well,” retorted one of the seated, “it may be all well and good for you that the bench was constructed according to an Act of Congress, but just for your information, we weren’t.”

POLYPHONY POLYGAMY

A Philadelphia businessman was telling telephone tales.

“In this city,” he said, “we have two telephone companies, so in my office I have one receiver for each. Last week, I hired a new office boy, and one of his duties was to answer the phone.

The other day, when one of the bells rang, he answered the call and then came to tell me that my wife was on the line.

“Which one?” I asked.

“I’m sorry, sir,” the boy said. ‘I don’t know how many you have!’”

PHOTO FINISH

A woman once entered the studio of a well-known photographer in Buffalo and asked, “Are you the photographer?”

“Yes, madam.”

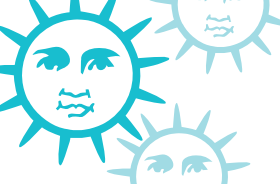
“Do you take children’s pictures?”

“Yes, certainly.”

“How much do you charge?”

“Three dollars a dozen.”

“Oh, well,” said the woman ruefully. “I’ll have to see you again sometime, as I only have 11.”



WHAT'S NEXT



AMUSEMENT

Peculiar Laws That Explain Everything



CALENDAR

Moon phases; June birthstone, holidays, and full Moon names



ASTRONOMY

Explore with our Sky Map



GARDENING

Summertime Is Lily Time



FOOD

Believe It or Not, It's Time for Pie!



LIVING NATURALLY

Take a Deep Breath!

Plus: Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts • Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Best Days to Do Things • Humor • and much more in the June *EXTRA!*

CELEBRATING THE ALMANAC'S 231ST YEAR!