

Broccoli Sprouting Activity

Broccoli sprouts are fun and easy to grow at home requiring zero soil or gardening expertise. They are extremely nutritious, full of cancer-fighting compounds, and taste great on just about anything!



Materials:

- 1 Clean 16 oz. (pint-size) wide-mouth Mason jar and lid (alternatively, a quart-size wide mouth jar also works)
- 1 Mesh sprouting lid. Here are three different materials you can use to make your own:
 - 1) A plastic canvas sheet (available at craft stores)
 - 2) A sheet of wire mesh screen (available at hardware stores)
 - 3) A piece of cheesecloth and a rubber band
- Scissors (if making your own sprouting lid)
- Measuring spoons
- Choose ONE of the following materials to make a sanitizing solution (directions included in the “Prep” section, below):
 - 1) original 8.25% bleach (non-scented)
 - 2) 5% vinegar (*note: never mix vinegar with bleach!*)
 - 3) 3% hydrogen peroxide*
- Cool tap water
- Broccoli sprouting seeds free of debris or discoloration (available online, at a garden center, or at some grocery stores; **make sure seeds are specific to sprouting and not planting**; certified organic seeds may be used)
- Small bowl

*If you are using hydrogen peroxide for your sanitizing method you will also need a pot, a fine mesh strainer and a cooking thermometer





Prep:

1. **If you do not have a mesh sprouting lid, first prepare the mesh lid:** Trace Mason jar lid onto the plastic canvas sheet (or wire screen) and carefully cut out a circle of mesh for the jar and ring with scissors. Wash canvas mesh or wire screen with soap and water, rinsing well. **OR** Fold cheese cloth 3-layers thick, and use scissors to cut a square of 3-ply cheesecloth that is larger than the mouth of your jar – use a rubber band to secure the cheesecloth to the jar.
2. **Sanitize seeds (this step is important to prevent food-borne pathogens) using one of the following three methods:**
 - **Method 1:** In your clean jar, put $\frac{1}{4}$ **teaspoon** of 8.25% bleach, and fill the rest of the way with cool tap water almost to the top of the jar (about 15 ounces**). Stir gently with measuring spoon. Add **1 Tablespoon** of broccoli sprouting seeds and stir gently with measuring spoon. Set a timer and let seeds soak in diluted bleach solution for 20-30 minutes. (**Soak in bleach for no longer than 30 minutes to prevent damaging seeds**).
***If using a quart-sized jar: use $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of bleach and 2 Tablespoons of seeds.*
 - **Method 2:** Soak the seeds to be sprouted in undiluted store-bought white vinegar for 15 minutes.
 - **Method 3:** On your stovetop, heat a solution of 3% hydrogen peroxide to 140°F using a clean, accurate cooking thermometer. Put the seeds in a small mesh strainer and immerse it directly in the heated peroxide solution for 5 minutes. Swirl the strainer at 1-minute intervals to achieve uniform treatment. Maintain temperature 140°F throughout the treatment. Always discard the peroxide solution after each seed batch as its effectiveness will rapidly decline. Rinse seeds, then place in your clean jar and proceed to step 3 where you will rinse them again.
3. **Rinse thoroughly.** Secure lid with mesh screen (either plastic, wire, or cheesecloth) and drain the water out of the jar while keeping the seeds contained within the mesh (the lid no longer needs to be removed throughout this process until sprouts are fully-grown and ready to enjoy). Through the holes in the lid, fill jar again with cool tap water, gently swirl, and drain. Repeat this rinsing process 3-4 more times. *If using sanitizing Method 1, you may need to rinse more than four times until the jar and water no longer smell of bleach.*

Directions:

1. **SOAK.** Refill jar about 2/3 with cool or lukewarm tap water. Soak seeds overnight (for ~12 hours) at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. Drain the soaking water.
2. **RINSE 2X/DAY.** Rinse seeds twice per day (once in the morning and once at night) by refilling jar with cool tap water, gently swirling, and draining water again. Rinse twice each time, for good measure. Invert and prop the jar at an angle in a bowl so water can continue to drain out of the jar and prevent molding issues. Store at room temperature away from humidity and out of direct sunlight.
3. **ENJOY.** Sprouts are ready in 3-6 days. Open the jar and add sprouts to a large bowl of water. This final rinse allows tough outer seed hulls to separate from the sprouts. The hulls are edible and harmless, but generally not desirable to eat, and may decrease the storage-life of your sprouts. Gently move the sprouts around in the water with your fingers to remove as many hulls as possible. Then, skim the hulls off the top and pull the sprouts out of the water



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with a slotted spoon or freshly-washed hands. Allow sprouts to air-dry on a clean cloth or paper towel for 5-10 minutes. Refrigerate drained sprouts in a sealed container for up to 3-4 days. These incredibly nutritious sprouts are great on sandwiches, salads, in smoothies, and easy additions to just about any meal.

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