

Transplanting Pepper Seedlings – When and How To Transplant – Pepper Geek

Transplanting involves moving your plants into new containers, and typically, this process is done twice a year.

In the first round, seedlings are moved from their seed cells into three-and-a-half-inch pots.

Transplanting is necessary for a couple of reasons. Firstly, using a larger container ensures that the soil retains more water than a plant of this size requires. This excess moisture can lead to saturated soil that goes unused by the plant and may invite mold and fungus. Secondly, transplanting saves space. As the plants grow, they will eventually outgrow the small seedling cells, which only provide limited space for root system development. Once the roots reach the edges of the container, it's time to move them into a larger one where they can continue to grow.

Guidelines for transplanting

Timing: Transplant your seedlings around two to three weeks after they have sprouted. At this stage, they should be about two to three inches tall and have two to three sets of true leaves. If you're unsure, you can check the root system by carefully sliding the soil out of the seed cell. The roots should be reaching the bottom and edges of the soil. It's best to transplant before the roots become densely coiled and root-bound.

Requirements and process:

1. Prepare the containers: Use three-and-a-half-inch plastic pots or similar containers for the

transplanting. Pre-label each container with the plant variety using masking tape and a Sharpie.

2. Pre-moisten the soil: Fill a mixing container with enough potting mix to fill the larger pots. Pre-moisten the potting mix with water, preferably filtered water to avoid chlorine and other chemicals.
3. Soil consistency: Add water slowly to the potting mix while mixing thoroughly. The soil should stick together when squeezed but not release excess water. If it becomes too wet, add dry soil and mix again. You can also add soil amendments like epsom salt or guanos at this stage.
4. Fill the pots: Fill the pots about three-quarters full, compressing the soil until you feel some resistance. Use your finger to create a hole in the soil large enough to accommodate the seedling. As you'll be adding more soil around the plant, the hole doesn't need to be as deep as the seedling's roots.
5. Transplanting process: Gently remove the seedling's root ball from its cell, massaging the outside of the plastic container to loosen it. Flip the tray upside down and carefully pull the plant by its stem, being cautious not to crush it. If it's stubborn, try gently squeezing the container again. Never use force, as it could harm the plant. Place the seedling into the pre-dug hole in the new pot, ensuring the stem is centered. Add more soil to surround the seedling's roots, filling it up to the top of the soil surface. Avoid burying the young pepper stem too deep, as it can lead to stem rot. Finally, compress the soil gently around the pepper plant. By following these steps, you can successfully transplant your seedlings into larger containers, providing them with the space they need to thrive and grow.