

Beyond the Avocado Pit

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These are some of the plants I have grown (or tried to grow) from things I found in grocery stores.

Apples – *Malus domestica*, **Citrus** – *Citrus* spp.

Will not come true from seed; you might get large plants, no flowers
Cuttings - commercial apples and citrus are usually grafted

Avocados - *Persea americana*

Start in pot--pit needs light to germinate, brittle roots
Ornamental; dry leaves used in cooking (large avocados)

Cactus - *Opuntia* spp.

Fruit: pick out seeds & wash
Pads: Plant upright; water sparingly until established

Celery - *Apium graveolens*

Cut, leaving base and 1" stalks; soak in water, then plant in soil
Cut center stalks and leaves as they grow for seasonings

Coconuts - *Cocos nucifera*

Look for husk-on coconuts; listen for water sloshing inside or it won't sprout
Start in a bowl of water; plant in soil after sprouting

Dates - *Phoenix dactylifera*

Look for unpasteurized seeds; soak pits before planting
Slow-growing palm tree

Dragon fruit / Pitaya - *Stenocereus* spp. or *Selenicereus* spp.

Cactus, epiphyllum; very prickly, can be tough to handle
Beautiful flowers; fruit after plant matures
Seeds sprout fast (3-5 days) but must be planted fresh

Ginger - *Zingiber officinale*

Rhizomes (Geophytes), Barely cover rhizomes
Ginger - use small buds

Guavas - *Psidium* or *Feijoa*

Can grow quickly into a shrub
Not hardy in this zone, but will flower and fruit indoors

Lychee - *Litchi chinensis*, very sweet / **Quenepas** - *Melicoccus bijugatus*, very sour
Shell, eat fruit; plant the "bean" at the center. Plant 3-4 to a pot. Keep moist
Sprout indoors; squirrels will dig them out of pots and eat them

Mangoes - *Mangifera indica*

Hardest part is opening the pit; can leave intact but will take longer
Sprouting 2-3 weeks or longer



Mint, basil, sage, oregano – Family Lamianaceae

Rehydrate & root

Buy sprigs with a few nodes

Soak whole sprigs in water overnight to rehydrate, then root in water

Papayas – *Carica papaya*

Remove arils to prevent mold, speed germination

Many more seeds than you will use but they don't store well; plant at once, compost the rest

Passion Flowers – *Passiflora* spp.

Let fruit age a little until wrinkly

Cut open; start seeds in spring, pots outside

Vigorous vines will flower & fruit

Pineapples - *Ananas comosus*

Terrestrial bromeliad, not from trees

Cut off tops; remove fruit and lower leaves to expose roots; rinse/soak well to hydrate scurf

Keep leaves moist—scurf

Seeds will grow but take a long time to germinate - 6-8 months

Pomegranates - *Punica granatum*

Remove seeds from arils or just plant as is

Several to a pot--very pretty house plants, will flower in a year

Pumpkins and squash - *Cucurbita* spp.

Save seeds from Halloween pumpkins or just dump guts on garden

Starfruit or Carambola - *Averrhoa carambola*

Cut lengthwise to find seeds - very few per fruit

Plant seeds immediately after extracting

Plants will produce flowers and fruit when small

Sugar cane – *Saccharum* spp.

Cut in segments with 1-2+ nodes in each

Set bud shield upright - direction is important!

Cap top with candle wax

Grass-like sprouts from bud shield, roots from node

Sweet potato - *Ipomoea batatas*

Start in water, change water every few days

Pointed end up, blunt end down; slips will start either way

Continue growing in water or plant in pot or outdoors in spring

Turmeric - *Curcuma longa*

Grow rhizomes in pots, like iris, on top of soil

Use grated turmeric in smoothies, cooking

May go dormant in fall but if brought inside will come back in spring



Sources/Resources

- Tradewinds Fruit <https://www.tradewindsfruit.com/>
- Glasshouse Works <https://www.glasshouseworks.com/>
- Logee's <https://www.logees.com/>
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