Regrowing lettuce

Use a fresh lettuce heart for a short windowsill project and a few new leaves.

What you need

• A fresh romaine or cos lettuce base with 3 to 5cm of stem

• A clean shallow dish and water

• An optional small pot of peat-free compost

Step by step

1. Save the firm base after cutting the leaves. Discard scraps that are slimy or mouldy.

2. Stand the base cut-side up in a shallow dish with about 1cm of water. Do not submerge it.

3. Put it in a bright spot out of hot midday sun and change the water daily.

4. If healthy roots develop, move the base to a pot of compost, keeping the crown above the surface.

5. Pick a few tender new leaves once they are large enough. Remove the base if it deteriorates or starts to flower.

Make this project work for you

How long it takes

Small leaves may appear in 3 to 7 days. Allow around 2 to 3 weeks for a small picking.

What you can realistically expect

You are unlikely to regrow a complete shop-sized head. This is a short project for a few leaves; fresh seed is better for regular harvests.

Safety and hygiene

Warm standing water encourages decay. Clean the dish, discard rotting bases and wash any leaves before eating.

A different way to do it

Set the dish on a stable tray within easy reach. A small daily water change can be shared with someone helping you.

Gardening is for everyone

You don’t need a big garden, expensive equipment or years of experience. Whether you can spend hours gardening or just a few minutes a week, there’s something you can grow. Whether you do everything yourself or have someone help you, you’re a gardener. You’re welcome here.

General UK guidance. Results vary with light, temperature, variety and care. Start small and ask for help whenever it suits you.

Questions? Growsmartuk@gmail.com