

# HERB SPIRALS – Ten Simple Steps

*Herb Spirals fit into small spaces – even hard surfaces, like driveways or patios. They attract pollinators, are relatively inexpensive, and are semi-permanent. Use your imagination and follow the ten simple steps outlined below. Check the internet and gardening books for ideas and inspiration.*



**Step 1: Select & Prepare Site** – Select an area that is mostly sunny, level, with a 6-foot diameter. If possible, located it in an area that is convenient for harvesting and close to a water source. Remove existing grass or cover area with non-glossy cardboard or weed fabric.

**Step 2: Measure & Orientation** – Determine North, South, East, and West. If possible, orient your spiral so that lowest point has a northern exposure. Ideally, spirals are laid clockwise (from outside/low point to inside/high point) in the northern hemisphere, and counter clockwise in the southern hemisphere. Six feet wide is ideal – you want to be able to reach into the middle to harvest.



**Step 3: Gather Tools & Materials** – For tools, a shovel, string, stakes, and measuring tape will come in handy. Materials list includes: cardboard/weed fabric, wall material/block, scrap material, gravel, 50/50 garden soil & compost mix, herbs, and an irrigation/drip line (optional). Consider expense, color, availability, shape/size when selecting wall material. If using scrap material in the center of spiral, be sure it is the same height as the outside wall material.



**Step 4: Lay Wall's Base Course** – Take time setting the first course to get it as level as possible. Leave 8 – 12 inches of planting space between the walls of the spiral. Use string and stakes to mark out your spiral ahead of time. To save money, consider using less expensive material on the inner, lower portions of the spiral.



**Step 5: Add Courses to the Spiral** – Start a new course every 2 ½ blocks, depending on size. Put the less expensive material on the inside. Overlap blocks to increase the stability of the spiral. Ideally, your spiral will have at least 4 courses.

**Step 6: Add Gravel to Base of Center of Spiral** – Adding gravel or small rocks to the center of the spiral will increase stability, improve drainage, and help prevent frost heaving in colder climates. Leave plenty of room for the soil mix.

**Step 7: Fill Spiral** – Use a 50/50 mix of compost and garden soil – estimate 1 cubic yard for a 6-foot diameter spiral. The soil mix should gradually slope down to the bottom of the spiral. Water well. If possible, let the soil mix settle for a few days, and then add more as needed.



**Step 8: Plant Herbs** – Plant herbs according to water, sunlight needs, and growth habits. Place drought-tolerant plants at the top, and water-loving at the base. Consider variations or color and texture, companion planting for pest management, grouping perennials together, and plants for pollinators. Label herbs for future harvesting. Water well – water from the top will flow downwards.

**Step 9: Irrigation** – Install an irrigation or drip line if using. Otherwise, water as needed starting from the top/center.

**Step 10: Enjoy & Harvest!** Watch your spiral transform as the herbs grow. Share with others. Dry and freeze.

