



To pick, dry and store medicinal plants

Pick

- * Choose a sunny morning to go foraging. The plants are not to be wet when they are harvested.
- * Use a basket, textile shopping bag or paper bag for the herbs – do not use a plastic bag.
- * Put the herbs out to dry as soon as possible. Prepare a place to dry them before you head out.
- * Do not take more than you need and make sure to leave some plants for the regrowth in each place.



Dry

- * Long stemmed plants can be hung from the ceiling in thin bunches.
- * Mosquito net is very practical for drying herbs. Pile them on top of each other with books or bricks in between, hang them from the ceiling and move them around as you please.
- * Build a rack for large frames with mosquito net bottoms.
- * Hang bed sheets on a frame of clothesline to form a flat textile bed for the plants. This gives you a large drying surface.
- * Small amounts can be spread on a towel.
- * Roots are carefully washed (the only time you wash a plant before drying), chopped into cm-large pieces and dried in the oven on 40 °C with the hatch slightly open. A drying cupboard or mushroom dryer is even better.
- * Never dry the herbs in direct sunlight.
- * The plants are dry when they crumble easily.



Store

- * Dark glass jars are the best for but may be hard to find. Clear glass jars are also good but have to be stored in a dark cupboard.
- * Biscuit tins are large, air tight and good for plants.
- * Paper bags work reasonably well but the herbs won't keep as long as in a glass jar.
- * For large quantities I use jute sacks lined with pillow covers. I store the sacks in a cool and dry space and the herbs will keep for at least one year.
- * Label your bags and jars with plant name and harvest date. Under normal conditions the plants will keep for one year. They loose taste, fragrance and active substances successively.
- * Store the herbs indoors, in a dry and dust free environment. Outside or in damp storage rooms they loose their effect rapidly.
- * Return excessive plants to nature. I believe that to be a nice way of returning what you no longer need.