

## Pigweed

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Family         | Portulacaceae          |
| Botanical      | Portulaca oleracea     |
| Parts Used     | Leaves and stems       |
| USDA Hardiness | N/A                    |
| Light          | Full sun to part shade |
| Soil           | Well drained           |
| Duration       | Annual                 |



|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Propagation | Scatter the seeds over the area that you plan on growing the purslane. Do not cover the seeds with soil. Purslane seeds need light to germinate so they must stay on the surface of the soil. If you are using purslane cuttings, lay them on the ground where you plan on growing purslane. Water the stems and they should take root in the soil in a few days. |
| Water       | As needed   |
| Growing     | All purslane needs to grow is part to full sun and clear ground. They are not picky about soil type or nutrition, but, purslane does tend to grow better in drier soil.   |

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**Medicinal Uses** Antiseptic (infection reducing), febrifuge (fever reducing), antispasmodic (suppresses spasms), diuretic (increases urination), vermifuge (expels parasitic worms), anti-scorbutic, bronchodilator, anti-ascorbic, antipyretic (fever reducing), anti-asthmatic, antitussive (cough suppressant), antifungal

**Benefits** Some of the health benefits of purslane include its ability to help lose weight, boost heart health, help in the proper development of children, treat certain gastrointestinal diseases, prevent certain cancers, protect the skin, boost vision, strengthen the immune system, build strong bones, and increase circulation.

**Preparation** Tincture is a popular method to extract the beneficial compounds from a plant-based material and make them easier to be absorbed by our body. Tinctures are usually taken orally and people often mix them with plain water or fruit juice. These are a few steps to prepare purslane tincture:

1. Harvest purslane in garden, park, field or roadside. Purslane leaves shouldn't be yellowed, rotted or wilted. You may need to take it in enough quantity.
2. Sterilize a jar and its lid, by submerging them in boiling water for 5 minutes. Set aside.
3. Chop purslane finely in very small pieces, the smaller the better. Fill a jar to about 3/4 full.
4. Add vodka to the above jar, until the liquid covers the herb completely. Shake gently to release trapped air bubbles, add more vodka if necessary. Seal the jar with the lid and shake vigorously. Place in a cool, dark place.
5. Shake the jar everyday for about a month, if possible two months. The storage and shaking process can help to release the medicinal compounds and essential oils to the alcohol.

6. When the storage period ends (1 or 2 months), sterilize another jar (and its lid) and wash your hands with soap. Strain the liquid into the recently sterilized jar using cheesecloth or muslin. Squeeze as much as liquid as you can and cap the jar. Before using the tincture, shake the jar vigorously, to make sure the beneficial compounds and nutrients are distributed evenly.

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# Fines Herbes

## Culinary Uses

Purslane leaves and stems are great raw in salads. You can steam them or add them to soups, stews, and other vegetable dishes. Beware of spurge, a different-looking poisonous creeping wild plant that sometimes grows near purslane. The stem is wiry, not thick, and it gives off a white, milky sap when you break it. If you're very careless, you may put some in your bag along with purslane. Purslane is juicy, slightly lemony and fabulous in salsas, in salads, and chopped in potato salad, on tomato sandwiches, tossed with cheese cubes and vinegar and oil... Tastes best raw but the older stems can also be pickled.

Purslane can also be used simply as a green salad and eaten raw with other greens. For example, when making a salad, you can combine purslane with cherry tomatoes, baby spinach, lemon juice and olive oil. To complete the meal, add garbanzo beans, seared tunas, chicken breast and top them off with some freshly chopped herbs. You can also use raw purslane as wraps or an ingredient for sandwich. Purslane is also often used to replace spinach in dips, omelettes, casseroles and soups. You can also add purslane in pasta sauce. However, when overcooked, purslane can become quite slimy. They can also be pickled or cooked for consumption. When preserving purslane for the winter, you can use the combination of peppercorns, garlic cloves and apple cider vinegar.



## Historical Facts

Purslane seeds have been found in caves in Greece that were inhabited 16,000 years ago.

## Additional Tips

## Nutrition Facts

Purslane is high in Omega-3 fatty acids and contains vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin B, magnesium, calcium, potassium and iron. Purslane contains up to 4000 ppm of the omega-3 fatty-acid alpha linolenic acid (ALA); that means a 100 gram serving (between 3 and 4 ounces) contains 400 mg of ALA. Purslane counters depression. It is one of the five herbs -- lettuce, amaranth greens, lamb's quarters greens, and watercress are the other four -- richest in antidepressant substances. Purslane is a superior source of calcium, magnesium, potassium, phenylalanine, and tryptophan, all of which are known to moderate the effects of depressive brain chemicals.

A single one-cup serving contains all the vitamin E you need in a day, as well as significant amounts of vitamin C and pro-vitamin A. Purslane is one of the very best sources of magnesium. One cup supplies your minimum daily need of 450 mg. Lack of magnesium is associated with diabetes, migraines, osteoporosis, hypertension, and asthma.

One cup of fresh purslane gives you over 2000 mg of calcium and 8000 mg of potassium.