

GOURDS

All gourds belong to the Cucurbit (squash and pumpkin) family which comprises three groups - Hardshell, Ornamental and Loofahs. Hardshells (*Lagenaria* species) have white flowers, and produce fruit with thin, woody shells that mature to brown or tan. They're used to make birdhouses, dishware and other crafts. They include bottle, birdhouse, dipper, swan and apple types. Ornamental (*Cucurita* species) gourds are bright, multi-colored and thick-walled. The vines have yellow flowers. They're colorful and used in Fall arrangements. Ornamentals include Crown of Thorns, spoon, winged, Turk's Turban and egg types. Loofah gourds (*Luffa* species), also called dishrag gourd or vegetable sponge, are used to make bath sponges. They also are deliciously edible when young.

Growing gourds is similar to growing pumpkins. Seed should be soaked overnight. Plant 2-3 seeds per hill when the soil is warm. They may be started indoors. It's useful to train their long vines up a trellis to keep gourds off the ground. Leave in the garden until just before first frost. Gourds grow well in most soils and need full sun.

'Apple'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 1-1 ¼ lb

Apple-shaped, smooth, mottled dark green color turns brown when dried. Paint as an apple, use for birdhouses or other crafts.

'Birdhouse'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 12-14" long

A bottleneck gourd with a large bulbous body and narrow neck. Use for birdhouses or other crafts.

'Blister'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 9"x 12", 4-6 lb

Super warty, round-oval shape. Very decorative.

'Bule'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 8" long

Rare French heirloom (pronounced "Boo-lay"). Very warty, apple-shaped. Green color dries to brown.

'Bushel'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 18-24"+ long

Shaped like a large bowl with pot lid on top. Grows huge in warm climates. Use for crafts, storage container.

'Canteen'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 3" x 12"

Canteen-wheel shaped. Use to make canteens, purses, other crafts and decorations.

'Cave Man's Club'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 10-16" long

"Dipper" type gourd is knobby, looks like a long handled club. High yields.

'Corsican'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 4" x 9"

Saucer-shaped – resembles a cheese wheel. Great for making bowls, dishes, lidded containers.

'Crown of Thorns'

Type: Ornamental (*C. pepo*)

Size: 1 lb

Cream colored fruit is shaped like a crown with 10 finger-like projections. Edible when young. Also called '10 Commandments' gourd.

'Daisy Gourd'

Type: Ornamental (*C. pepo*)

Size: small

Mix of gourds with patterns of varied colors that resemble flowers.

'Gakhaa'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 11" x 20"

Algerian heirloom is bowling pin shaped and green with white spots. Pick young and eat like zucchini or let mature and use to make a bottle.

'Goblin Eggs'

Type: Ornamental (*C. pepo*)

Size: Small, egg-size

Small, egg-shaped fruit with lots of striped, zoned and speckled types as well as pure whites and golds. Decorative, great for a cornucopia.

'Koshare Yellow Banded'

Type: Ornamental (*C. pepo*)

Size: 4" long

2-5 bands of alternating yellow and dark green, spoon-shaped, multi-stem bush habit, high yield.

'Long Handled Dipper'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 36" handle with a 10" ball

Long siphon type. Long handled, pale green gourds. Great for making dippers and crafts.

'Martinhouse Bottle'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 10-18" diameter

True bottle gourd. Neck has triangular sides.

'Nigerian Saybo'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 18"

Rare Nigerian large bottle gourd with a bulbous neck and base. Use for crafts or bottle making.

'Penguin'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 12" long, 5" diameter

Penguin-shaped, light green color matures to tan. Aka 'Calabash'. Edible. Use for craft projects.

'Prickles'

Type: *Cucumis anguria*

Size: Small, golf-ball size

Days to maturity: 85

Golf ball size fruit with long green spines. Fun shape for fall decorating.

'Polo' (F1)

Type: *Trichosanthes anguina*

Size: 24" long

Days to maturity: 64

Long twisty fruit resemble snakes. Edible when young. For ornamental use allow to mature on the vine. Downy mildew resistant.

'Seven Happiness Luffa'

Type: *Luffa cylindrica*

Size: 12" long

Days to maturity: 100

When mature, dry, peel and use as a bath sponge (loofah). Edible when young – prepare like zucchini.

'Small Spoon'

Type: Ornamental (*C. pepo*)

Size: 5-6" long

Brightly colored orange and green striped. Small ball at end can be hollowed out to use as a spoon. Great for Fall decorations. High yields.

'Snake'

Type: *Trichosanthes anguina*

Size: 36" long, 8" around

Light green mottled skin. Used to make Aboriginal didgeridoos in Australia.

'Speckled Swan'

Type: Hardshell (*L. siceraria*)

Size: 12-14" long

Dipper type gourd that resembles a swan with it's neck curved. Grass green with creamy speckles.

'Tennessee Dancing Gourd'

Type: Ornamental (*C. pepo*)

Size: 2-3"

Tiny bottle gourd, green and white striped dries to a tan color. They spin just like a top! High yields.

'Turk's Turban'

Type: Ornamental (*C. maxima*)

Size: 3-5 lb, 7-9" diameter

Bright orange, prominent blossom end button looks like a turban and is striped silver, green and white.