

# Lemon Balm

## *Melissa officinalis*

Lemon balm is in the mint family and grows easily in Florida. It is a bushy herbaceous perennial that is typically grown in herb gardens and border fronts for its lemon-scented leaves. Lemon balm will self-seed and spread by rhizomes so grow it in a container if you don't want it to spread. Prune to remove spent flower stalks and encourage new growth for a better looking plant. Dried leaves can be used in sachets and potpourri. New growth lemon balm leaves are more flavorful than mature ones.

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INFORMATION**

**Type:** deciduous perennial herb

**USDA hardiness zones:** 4 through 9

**Uses:** herb garden; cottage gardens; rock gardens; groundcover; borders; container

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Height:** 24 to 36 inches **Spread:** 18 to 36 inches

**Plant spacing:** 12 to 36 inches

**Light requirement:** full sun to part shade

**Soil tolerances:** slightly acid to slightly alkaline; clay; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** low to moderate

**Invasive potential:** low

**Pest resistance:** no serious pests or diseases



Photo: Forest and Kim Starr, NC State Extension