



## The life cycle of a Cucumber

Seed to Fruit takes children through the different stages of growth in the life of a cucumber plant.



The young plants roots grow down.  
The stem grows up



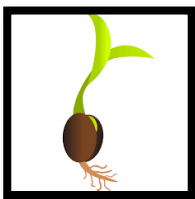
The plant changes as it grows.



The adult plant make flowers



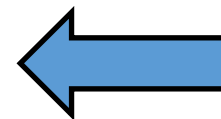
The flowers make fruit.  
Seeds grow inside the fruit



Germination



Plant seeds into soil.  
They need water and warmth to sprout



The parent plant dies.  
The seeds may scatter.  
They may grow into new plants



## All cucumbers are different

There are about fifty different kinds of cucumbers. Some of them have smooth skins and others have bumpy skins. Smooth-skinned cucumbers are usually dark green and the bumpy-skinned cucumbers are light green and greenish-yellow.

The thick skin of a cucumber makes it harder for bugs to eat, so cucumbers are not usually bothered by bugs. The plants aren't so lucky, though. People who grow cucumbers need to check for bugs on the plants almost every day and must kill the bugs quickly so they do not destroy the plants.

Cucumbers are members of the melon family. This means cucumbers are actually a fruit instead of a vegetable. Cucumbers are green and are shaped like a tube.

The outside skin of the cucumber is called the peel. It is tough and not very tasty. The inside of the cucumber is called the flesh. This is the yummy part. It is light green and soft, yet crunchy. The centre of the flesh is filled with seeds that are safe to eat.



Cucumbers are eaten raw—without the peeling. You can eat them in salad, on sandwiches, or by themselves. Cucumbers are also used to make pickles; dill pickles, sweet pickles, or spicy pickles.

You cannot cook cucumbers, though. They turn to mush. YUK!

