OCIMUM BASILICUM

Kingdom: Plantae

Clade: Tracheophytes

Clade: Angiosperms

Clade: Eudicots

Clade: Asterids

Order: Lamiales

Family: Lamiaceae

Genus: Ocimum

Species: O. basilicum



Basil is an annual, or sometimes perennial, herb used for its leaves. Depending on the variety, plants can reach heights of between 30 and 150 centimetres (1 and 5 feet). Basil leaves are glossy and ovulate, with smooth or slightly toothed edges that typically cup slightly; the leaves are arranged oppositely along the square stems. Leaves may be green or purple. Its flowers are small and white, and grow from a central inflorescence, or spike, that emerges from the central stem atop the plant. Unusual among Lamiaceae, the four stamens and the pistil are not pushed under the upper lip of the corolla, but lie over the inferior lip. After entomophilous pollination, the corolla falls off and four round achenes develop inside the bilabiate calyx.

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