How to Grow Desert Willow from Seeds

The desert willow is a small shrub-like tree that grows from 15 to 30 feet tall and wide with trumpet shaped, pinkish-purple and white flowers. The desert willow is not actually related to the willow family. Native to the southwestern United States, this shrub is drought- and heat-tolerant, but it can withstand winter temperatures down to only 20 degrees F. Desert willow seeds are easy to germinate, requiring no special treatment other than some well-draining soil, water and sunlight.

Things You'll Need
• Planter pots, 6-inch and larger
• Peat moss
• Organic compost

1 Fill a 6-inch planter pot with a mixture of equal parts peat moss, organic compost and coarse sand. Ensure that the planter pot has drainage holes in the bottom.

2 Sow five to six of the desert willow seeds together in the spring, spacing them 1 or 2 inches apart and pressing them just below the soil surface. Place the planter pot in a bright, sunny window and keep the potting medium moist at all times.

3 Thin the seedlings to remove all but one or two of the healthiest, most vigorous seedlings. If you have two equally healthy seedlings, remove one of the two and replant it into its own 6-inch pot. Place the pots in full sunlight.

4 Cut back on watering the desert willow after the seeds have germinated and the seedlings grow to about 5 or 6 inches tall. Allow the potting medium to dry out before watering.

5 Grow the young desert willow in the pot until the following spring. Replant the desert willow as it grows into larger pots to prevent it from becoming root-bound and to encourage healthy growth.

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