

Pick the best variety for you

Maneuvering through the corn section of seed catalogs can be daunting. The main things to watch for are phrases like “widely adaptable”—which assumes a degree of disease resistance—and “days to maturity.” Early-season corn is ready to harvest in less than 75 days from sowing, midseason in 75 to 85 days, and late-season corn in more than 85 days. Grow early- and late-season corn to extend the season, but plant them 30 feet apart because cross-pollination between different varieties is possible. Isolation is essential with some new sweets.

CLASSIFICATION	NAME	DAYS TO MATURITY	DETAILS
<p>Standard (su): Popular early hybrids with varying degrees of sweetness and flavor. Although they have to be cooked soon after the ears are picked, their seeds germinate in soil as cool as 55°F, an advantage in short-season areas. They require no isolation from other types. All are widely adaptable.</p>	<p>‘Butter and Sugar’</p>	73	A tender and sweet variety that is the standard of excellence for bicolor corn.
	<p>‘Seneca Horizon’</p>	70 to 80	A reliable yellow with good traditional corn flavor.
	<p>‘Silver Queen’</p>	92	A robust white corn. Sweet and tender yet still retains a traditional taste. In short-season areas, devotees heat up soil in the most favorable site and start plants indoors.
<p>Sugary enhanced (se): Characterized by sweet, creamy, tender kernels. Flavor keeps for more than a week in the refrigerator. Seeds germinate at 62°F. No need to isolate from su varieties. Keep white, bicolor, and yellow varieties 30 feet apart.</p>	<p>‘Chippawa’</p>	70	A very tender bicolor. Widely adaptable.
	<p>‘Kandy Korn’</p>	89	One of the original se corns, popular for its tender, creamy yellow kernels and distinctive looks: red stalks with corn husks flushed burgundy. Good for freezing or canning. Widely adaptable.
	<p>‘Speedy Sweet’</p>	57 to 64	A vigorous bicolor for short-season areas.
	<p>‘Whiteout’</p>	74	A sturdy-stemmed white with excellent flavor. Widely adaptable.
<p>Supersweet (sh2): Not as tender as other types but the sweetest of all. Seeds germinate at 65°F. Flavor lasts four to six days in the refrigerator. Isolate from non-sh2 types.</p>	<p>‘Illini Xtra Sweet’</p>	78	A juicy, bright yellow corn. Freezes well.
	<p>‘Sweetie’</p>	82	A sweet and tender yellow that keeps its sweetness longer than others.
<p>Synergistic (sy): A cross between se and sh2, resulting in very sweet, tender corn that keeps well. Germinates better in cool soil than sh2. Can be grown with su and se varieties, but isolate from other sh2 corn.</p>	<p>‘Avalon’</p>	82	A very sweet, sturdy white. Widely adaptable.
	<p>‘Montauk’</p>	78	A reliable high-sugar bicolor. Widely adaptable.
	<p>‘Polka’</p>	59 to 66	A slim-eared bicolor that germinates well in cool soil.