

Sunflower Plant Life Cycle

Sunflowers are a type of flowering plant. They originally came from North America. There are around 60 different types of sunflower! They can be yellow, dark red and orange. Two types are the 'American Giant' and the 'Big Smile'. The tallest sunflower on record was 9.17 metres (30 feet 1 inch) tall and was grown by Hans-Peter Schiffer in 2014 in Germany!

1



What happens during the first stage?

Seed and Germinating Seed

During the first stage of the sunflower life cycle, the seed is planted in soil or compost in spring when it is warmer. The seeds are black and white striped or just black. The seeds have a hard coat that helps protect the seed. Next, the seed begins to sprout roots 1-2 weeks after planting.

2



What happens during the second stage?

Seedling and Shoot

During the second stage, a seedling grows above ground and a few leaves appear on the stem of the plant. Underground, roots continue to grow to keep the sunflower planted in the ground.

3



What happens during the third stage?

Bud and Bloom

During the third stage, the plant grows taller and stronger, facing towards the sun. After 30 days, the bud forms. Then the flower head opens and after around 90 days, the sunflower will be fully grown.

4



What happens during the fourth stage?

Wilt and Regrowth

At the end of the summer the flower petals will start to wilt. This is the final stage of the life cycle, when the plant dies. The flower shrivels and the seeds from its head fall onto the ground. There can be up to 2000 seeds! Some of the seeds settle in the ground and then begin the new life cycle of the next sunflower.

Questions about the Sunflower

1. How many different types of sunflower are there?

2. What colours can sunflowers be?

3. How tall was the tallest sunflower ever grown?

4. Why is the sunflower seed planted in spring?

5. What colour are the seeds?

6. What grows above ground and underground during the second stage?

7. When does the bud form?

8. What happens when the flower shrivels?

9. How many new seeds can fall from the head of the shrivelled flower?

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Answers

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3. How tall was the tallest sunflower ever grown?

The tallest sunflower on record was 9.17 metres (30 feet 1 inch) tall.

4. Why is the sunflower seed planted in spring?

The seed is planted in spring because it is warmer.

5. What colour are the seeds?

Sunflower seeds are black and white striped or just black.

6. What grows above ground and underground during the second stage?

A seedling grows above ground and a few leaves appear on the stem of the plant. Underground, roots continue to grow.

7. When does the bud form?

After 30 days, the bud forms.

8. What happens when the flower shrivels?

The flower shrivels and the seeds from its head fall onto the ground.

9. How many new seeds can fall from the head of the shrivelled flower?

There can be up to 2000 seeds.