

# Propagating Strawberry Plants from Runners

You shouldn't ever have to buy strawberry plants once you buy your first plant. They will multiply like rabbits. You should always clip off the runners or your fruit production will be reduced significantly. However, if you leave one runner per plant for propagation, you will end up with a significant patch within a year. I started my current patch with 75 plants in 2009 and currently have over 3,500 plants. Here's a photo summary of how to propagate new plants from runners.



Wait for the Runner to develop visible roots. The Node at the base of the leaf growth is where the roots grow. Wait until you can see 1/4" minimum of roots protruding from the node. We all have Coir Disks with seeds that didn't grow in those Jiffy Trays, or you can buy Coir Starter Disks at your local Garden Center. I buy Coir Starting Pellets in bulk. I wet them thoroughly until they expand, then poke a hole in the center with a pencil end or my finger, big enough for the root to fit. Then I add a tsp of potting soil to fill around the foot. Finally take a small rubber band and place it around the coir disk holding the root firmly in place.



The most important step is **Don't** cut the runner from the parent plant. Place the potted root on the ground next to the plant and leave it connected for 7-10 days, until the runner has rooted. Until the root establishes, the runner plant needs to draw energy from the mother plant (think of it as an umbilical cord for baby plants). If you are growing in Hanging Baskets, just let the potted runner hang off the side of the planter, until it has established.



As an alternate method, I often use small pots or yogurt containers with potting soil. I plant the runner in the pot, and then take a large paper clip, straightening it out so that it looks like a long U-Shape Staple. I pin the runner in place with the U-shape paperclip staple.



After the 7-day period, the root has established, and the runner can be cut. Now you can replant it or give it away to friends. I like the Coir-disk potted roots because you can wet them down, cram a few hundred in a box and ship them, or give them away along the side of the road. People love Freebies.