

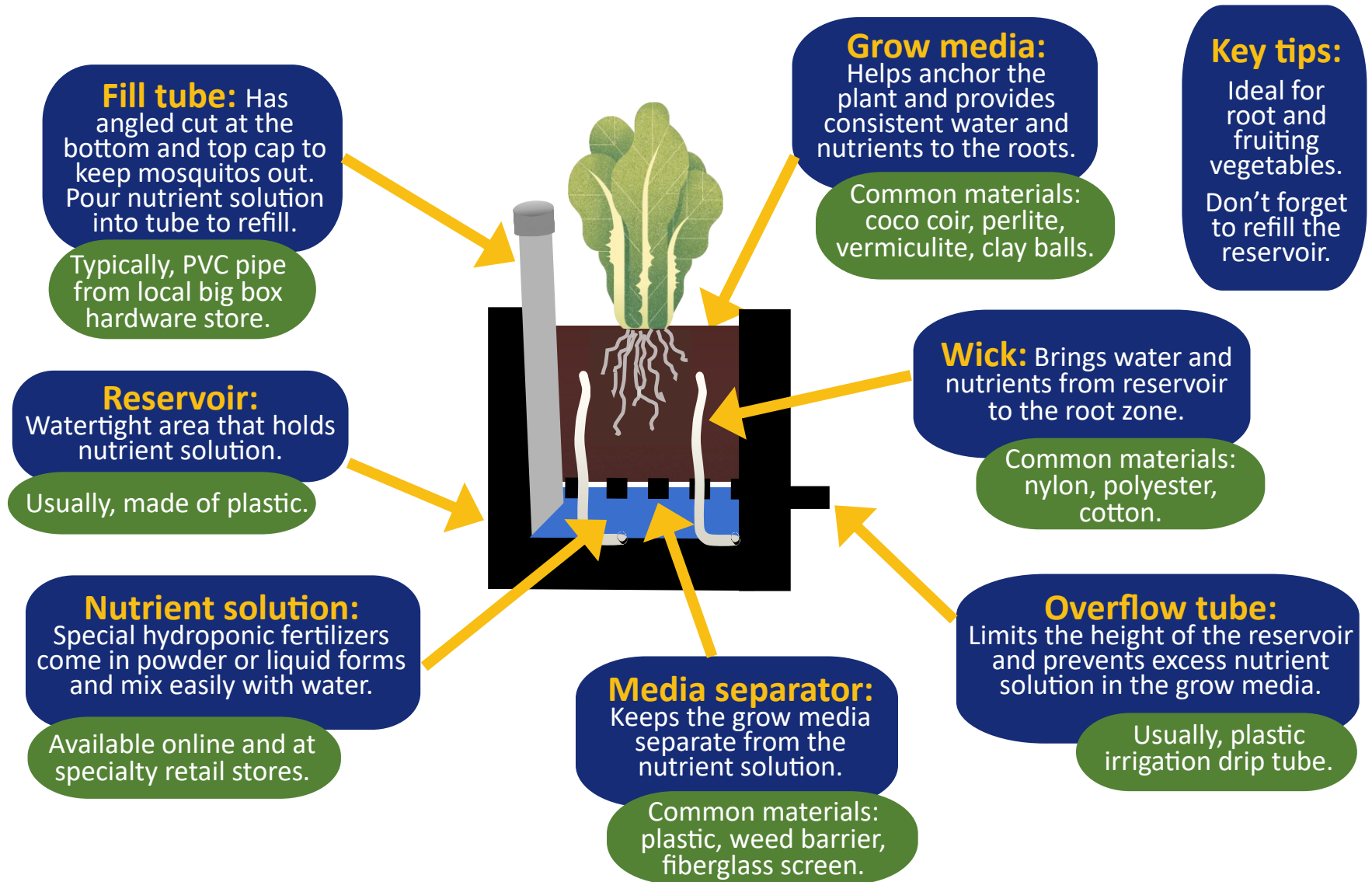


UC Master Gardener
University of California
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Wicking Hydroponics: A Soilless Growing Method



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Wicking Hydroponics: A Soilless Growing Method

Wicking hydroponic system diagram showing a plant growing in a container with grow media above a nutrient reservoir. Wicks move nutrient solution from the reservoir to the roots.

The grow media is in the upper two thirds of the container, helps anchor the plant, and provides consistent water and nutrients to the roots. Common materials are coco coir, perlite, vermiculite, and clay balls.

The lower third of the container has a reservoir, which is a watertight area that holds the nutrient solution and is usually made of plastic.

The media separator sits between the grow media and the reservoir and keeps the grow media out of the nutrient reservoir. It is typically made of plastic, weed barrier, or fiberglass screen.

An overflow tube sits just below the media separator and limits the height of the reservoir, which prevents excess nutrient solution in the grow media.

The nutrient solution in the reservoir is a mix of water and special hydroponic fertilizers that come in powder or liquid forms.

A PVC fill tube extends above the container and into the reservoir, with an angled cut at the bottom and a mosquito-proof cap on top for easy refilling.

Wicks bring water and nutrients from the reservoir into the root zone.

Key tips: Ideal for root and fruiting vegetables. Don't forget to refill the reservoir.

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