



FIGS ARE RIPENING

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Unripe green figs are smaller in size compared to ripe figs, erect on the stem, and firm to the touch.
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Yes, the time for figs to ripen has arrived. In most areas, the relatively mild winter months aided figs in producing a good crop of new shoots resulting in a bounty of small green fruit. Here in South Carolina, figs tend to ripen in August continuing into September depending on the variety. Those small green figs should be well on their way to gaining in size and maturing in color. Fig ripeness cues include sight, touch, and taste. By sight, ripe figs tend to droop while hanging on the tree or bush, have a larger distinguishable size than the immature green fruit, and with the exception of a few varieties have a change in color. By touch, ripe figs should be soft when gently squeezed. Unripe figs remain firm. By taste, ripe figs are sweet with a soft texture. Unripe figs lack sweetness and can be somewhat rubbery. It is important to keep in mind that not all figs will ripen at the same time.

Figs not ripening? Be patient, it can take figs up to two months from fruit formation to reach optimal ripeness. Fig plants have a long juvenile period before producing fruit, as long as 2 to 6 years from planting. So, time may be all that is required. Seasonal factors that influence the timing of fig formation and ripening are cold winter temperatures, fruit produced on new shoots because of severe winter die back, or late-maturing cultivars. Inadequate irrigation, low soil fertility, hot dry weather, or insufficient sunlight are all factors that can influence fruiting as well. Green figs will not ripen off the tree. Figs picked just before full ripeness will continue to soften and become sweeter if left in a dry location with a moderate temperature. For more information on growing and producing figs, see [HGIC 1353, Fig.](#)



As ripening begins, most figs become larger in size and change color.
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Ripe figs tend to droop downwards while hanging on the plant.
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After picking, wash fresh figs for immediate enjoyment or store for later use.
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