



Summer Bulbs

How to Plant

- Summer-flowering bulbs and tubers include begonias, dahlias, cannas, gladioli, and lilies, to name a few.
- They can be planted outdoors in the spring after the risk of ground frost has passed. Choose a well-drained site in full sun or part shade.
- For a dramatic effect, plant in groups of 5-10 of the same variety and colour.
- In general the planting depth should be twice the depth as the height of the bulb, with the roots facing down.
- Begonias and dahlias may be planted just below the soil surface.
- The space between bulbs varies according to the mature height of the plant. Small varieties can be spaced at 4" apart, gladiolus 5", begonias 10", lilies 12" and dahlias as much as 16".
- Many summer bulbs make excellent candidates for container gardens in which case they can be spaced closer together, (just remember to keep them well watered and fed throughout the growing season.)
- Summer bulbs require a great deal of water immediately after planting. In dry spring periods keep the soil in your garden or container moist.

Dahlias

- Plant tubers 4-5" deep, covering with loose soil.
- For tall varieties sink a 4-5' stake alongside the tuber before it is covered. When the dahlia reaches 12" in height tie it loosely to the stake.
- Water when the soil is dry, giving a good soaking.
- For larger blooms, disbud the two side buds, leaving only the center one. When this bud develops a stem 6" long cut off the leaf buds that appear at the base of the leaves on the same stem. This will help to obtain perfect flowers on long stems.
- Use 2-3" of peat moss mulch around each plant during the latter part of the summer.
- Cut blooms in the morning only. Leave in cold water for 3-4 hours before bringing in to room temperature.
- After the first killing frost, dig up the tubers, leaving soil attached. Allow to dry for two weeks.
- Clean the tubers and store them in moist sand or peat moss for the winter in a cool dry place (4-10° C). Check moisture levels periodically.

Gladioli

- Plant the first gladioli corms two weeks before the last expected frost.
- Successive plantings every 7 days until the beginning of June will provide bloom through most of the summer months.
- Glads prefer sandy loam soils and full sun. Thoroughly loosen the soil. Plant 3-6" deep and 3-6" apart.
- For cut flowers – cut the spikes of blooms in early morning and as soon as the colour shows. Place in water immediately. Allow 4 leaves to stay with the remaining plant in order to develop strong corms for the next season.
- In the fall when stems and leaves have died dig up the corms, shake off the soil and let them air dry.
- Cut off the stems 2" from the corm and dust with a bulb dust to protect against overwintering insects and disease. Store in a dry, frost-free place until ready to plant next season. Tiny cormlets can be saved and stored for propagation next spring. Two to three growing seasons are required for the cormlets to obtain flowering size.

Lilies

- Lilies prefer a light sandy soil with some organic matter and protection from the hot noonday sun. (They do not perform well in complete shade)
- They should be planted 6-7" deep and 8-12" apart.
- Soil should be kept moist
- Remove faded blooms and cut back flower stems as the leaves turn yellow. This helps to ensure well-developed bulbs for next year. Bulbs can be left in the ground over winter. A 2-3" layer of mulch applied to the soil surface will help the bulbs to overwinter.
- Leave lily beds undisturbed as long as they provide good blooms. Only when blooming becomes poor should they be re-planted.
- Lilies may be fed in early spring and again before bloom.

Ranunculus

- Plant in sun or part-shade as soon as the soil warms up.
- Ranunculus prefer a light, sandy and fertile soil. Deeply spaded soil with liberal amounts of peat moss and composted manure make the best beds.
- Soak the corms in lukewarm water for a few hours before planting.
- Plant the corms 3" deep and 6-8" apart, with the point of the claws downward.
- After foliage has died down naturally and before heavy frost, dig up corms and store in a cool, dry location until planting time next year.

