

FALL BULBS

Fall bulb planting is one of the easiest ways to bring beautiful color to your home and gardens. The intensity and wide range of color is unmatched by any other plant group. Bulbs can be used in nearly any garden or patio setting giving you flowers, fragrance and brilliant color with just a little effort. "Bigger is better" when choosing bulbs. Energy for spring growth is stored in the bulbs so a larger bulb means more stored energy and a stronger, healthier plant.

PREPARE THE SOIL

Bulbs require a well drained soil rich in organic material. Spread a three inch layer of **Nature Life Composted Cotton Burrs** over the bed. Work it into the top twelve inches of the soil. One three-cubic foot bag of Nature Life is needed for each 12 square feet of bedding area.

CHILLING: The Dormant Rest Period

Most of the bulbs that we plant in the fall are native to areas of the world with long, cool growing seasons and long winters. For these bulbs, the long winter must be simulated since our warm climate doesn't provide a very long winter. To simulate the long winter, place your bulbs in a paper bag, not plastic, in the vegetable crisper of your refrigerator for six to eight weeks before planting. Bulbs such as Tulips, Hyacinths, Crocus, Narcissus (Daffodils) require this type of chilling. One catch to this process is that bulbs cannot be stored in a refrigerator that contains other fruits and vegetables. The ethylene gas emitted from the fruits and veggies can cause the bulbs to die. The bulbs sold at Little Red Riding Hood Nursery are pre-chilled in our bulb house to ensure success.

PLANTING BULBS

A general rule is to plant bulbs at a depth three times the greatest diameter of the bulb. Dig a hole and sprinkle **Howard Johnson's Better Bulbs Fertilizer** in the bottom of the hole. Place the bulb in the hole with the pointed end up. Cover the bulb with soil and water thoroughly. A two inch layer of mulch on top of the bed will help prevent winter weeds, retain moisture and insulate against severe winter cold.

CONTAINER PLANTING

Container planted bulbs can be used to provide portable color on your patio or in your living room. Place a layer of gravel in the bottom of the container to improve drainage. Fill the container with **Berger Potting Soil**. Never use garden soil in your containers because it will cause the soil to compact. Place the bulbs in the container as you would plant them in the ground and water lightly. For bulbs that require additional chilling, cover the container with paper or foil and place it in the refrigerator for six to eight weeks. After this chilling period, take the container out of the refrigerator, water thoroughly and place the container in a warm sunlit area indoors or outdoors. The bulbs will awaken and sprout in about two to three weeks.

WATERING and FEEDING

Keep the soil moist throughout the growing season. Bulbs that remain planted for blooming next year will need additional fertilizer to produce and store food for next year's blooms. Apply **Miracle Grow Nursery Select** to the bulb bed when the blooms begin to fade.

PEST and DISEASE CONTROL

Most insects are not very active during the cool season. As spring arrives, though, so will the insects. Control Aphids, thrips, wireworms and mites with **Orthenex**. To avoid spreading root rot and other fungus diseases, dust the bulbs with Dusting Sulfur before planting. **Green Light Bug and Snail Bait** can be used if you see large irregular sections of leaves eaten by slugs or snails. Bring in a sample of the affected plant to our Certified Nursery Professionals for diagnosis and advice.

AFTER BLOOMING

Most bulbs that require cool summers will not survive in the ground during our long, hot summers. These bulbs can be saved with some success for planting again next fall. Many gardeners though, treat their bulbs like annuals and simply leave them in the ground plant new bulbs next season. You will often find that planting your bulbs 2-3 inches deeper than the recommended depth will keep them cool enough during the summer to survive.

If you elect to save your bulbs for planting next year, wait until the leaves have died down before digging them up. Dry the bulbs for a week in a dark, ventilated area. Dust with Dusting Sulfur and store in a cool location in a n open bag or nylon stocking with perlite or vermiculite.

Many varieties of Daffodils, Narcissus, Muscari, Bearded Iris, and most Lilies can be left in the ground to "naturalize" and bloom year after year. These should be treated like any other perennial. Although they will go through a dormant "rest" period, they will require regular watering, feeding and mulching. They will continue to reward you with blooms for many years.

FALL GARDEN BULB PLANNER

Use the chart below when planning your bulb garden. The bulbs are listed in the order that they bloom and heights are given so you can plan your beautiful, colorful garden. We've also listed some additional planting information.

Name	Height	Planting Depth	Comments
Galanthus (Snowdrop)	4-1"	3-4"	Bell shaped white flowers; plant in partial shade
Leucojum	6-9"	3-4"	Bell-shaped, white flowers; easy to grow
Fritillari	30-36"	4-6"	Bell-shaped, colorful flowers; Showy & unusual
Crocus	2-6"	2-4"	Variety of colors; easy to grow
Grape Hyacinth (Muscari)	4-8"	2-3"	Miniature sized Hyacinth; reliable perennial
Hyacinth	8-10"	5-6"	Beautiful and very fragrant; don't miss this one!!
Daffodils	6-16"	4-6"	Includes Jonquils and Narcissus- many varieties
Tulips	8-28"	5-6"	Hundreds of varieties and colors
Dutch Iris	8-22"	3-4"	Beautiful shades of blue, purple, yellow, white
Allium	3-5"	4-6"	Onion family; striking flower globes
Lycoris	18-24"	3-5"	Fall blooming spider lily

If you have any question please call, write or drop by:

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