



HYDRANGEA

Graceful Hydrangeas add a splash of color wherever you plant them. Bursting with vivid season-long blossoms, perfect fresh or dried for arrangements and crafts, these easy-care classics thrive almost anywhere in your garden. Check variety for recommended sun exposure before planting.

Planting, fertilizing and pruning specifics can vary with type, but here are the basics:

PLANTING:

Early spring and fall are the best times to plant Hydrangea, and you can add them all summer, just make sure to water them regularly.

Water well before transplanting. Dig a hole that is twice as wide and as deep as your plant's root ball or container. Place so that the top of the root ball is at the same height as the surrounding soil.

Containers: Gently slip your plant out of its container and loosen the root ball. If the root ball is tight and crowded, slash the root ball, or spread or cut roots so they branch into the soil. Cut off any roots circling the bottom of the container.

Bare root: The roots of bare root shrubs must be kept moist. Soak your shrub for one to two hours before planting. Gently spread out the roots.

Backfill with native soil, with added compost, and pack lightly. Level soil so water runs away from the base, but not away from the root area. Water thoroughly and mulch with compost.

FEEDING/WATERING:

Hydrangeas love a mulch of compost in spring and winter. Feed mature plants with an all-purpose organic fertilizer in early spring, and again after flowering.

Hydrangeas are also water lovers, so be sure to water new plants deeply and regularly for the first three years, and once established, water regularly, especially during dry spells.

PRUNING:

First, determine what type your Hydrangea is or you might accidentally prune away the flowers before they appear! There are three types: Old Wood Flowering (last year's growth), New Wood Flowering (this season's growth), or Old and New Wood Flowering.

Old Wood Flowering, Old and New Wood Flowering:

In early to mid-spring when buds begin to swell, prune off last season's flowers to the first bud or pair of buds beneath the flower heads. On established plants, cut back 1/3 to 1/4 of the oldest shoots to the base to promote new growth.

New Wood Flowering:

In early to mid-spring, cut down to 1-2 feet. This can also rejuvenate old shrubs as well.