



LAVENDER

Outdoors or indoors, fragrant, hardy Lavenders not only provide a summer of fresh flowers, but their blossoms can be dried and used all year round. All they need is some bright sunshine, and a little care, and their romantic aroma will be on hand for years to come.

PLANTING:

Lavender thrive in fertile, well drained soil, so if you need to, add some compost and sand.

You can plant Lavender any time after danger of frost has passed. Gently loosen the root ball. This helps the roots become established in their new setting. If the root ball is tight and crowded, cut 1/4 inch off the bottom.

Space plants based on growing width of their variety, generally 24 inches apart. Lavenders need air circulation, so plant far them enough apart so when they mature, their branches do not touch. Water in well and feed with an organic 5-10-5 fertilizer. If mulching your Lavender, do so with pea gravel or sand, to reflect heat up to the plant.

FEEDING/WATERING:

Feed sparingly, every other month with a 5-10-5 organic fertilizer. Water moderately for new plants, lightly for established ones. Lavender are drought tolerant, so err on the side of under-watering.

PRUNING:

Established Lavender have a tendency to become woody, so prune once a year, after they have finished blooming. Prune back by 1/3 to 1/2 of the plant, but do not prune into the woody stems. The older wood cannot regenerate and could die.

HARVESTING:

You can harvest Lavender leaves and blossoms anytime. Pick flowers before the last blooms on each stalk are fully open. Harvest on a dry day, before the sun evaporates all the essential oils. Tie stalks in 2" bundles and hang in a dry, dark space. When stalks are crisp, strip the flowers from the stems if desired, and store in airtight containers.

Climbing Hydrangea:

Prune after flowering to control growth and promote air circulation.

WINTER CARE:

Mulch with compost to protect roots during winter. Avoid using a bark-based mulch and keep it away from the base of your plant. Consider leaving spent flower heads on your plant to protect the buds below.

HARVESTING/DRYING: In late summer, cut blossoms just as flowers are starting to fade. Strip off leaves, place in a vase with water, away from direct sunlight and allow the water to evaporate.

If your plants leaves are turning yellow with green veins, they may need iron, zinc and magnesium. Apply chelated micronutrients once in the early spring, as your plants start to push new growth.