

Planting & Care Instructions

Upon Arrival

- **Open all boxes and crates** and remove the bags of bulbs so air can get to them. Check the bags against the packing list and call immediately with any issues.
- **Plant as soon as possible.** Unless you specified a particular delivery week, your bulbs have been shipped at the appropriate time for planting in your area. Get them in the ground as soon as you can.
- **If you can't plant right away,** the bulbs will keep for a week or two in a dry, cool place with good air circulation. Temperatures between 50° and 60°F are ideal, but your bulbs should be fine from 35° to 75°F. Keep them from freezing.

Important: Bulbs must be planted this fall

Choosing a Site

There are two key considerations when choosing a site for bulbs.

- 1: Sunlight.** Most bulbs need ample sunshine to bloom well next spring and to store up the energy required to flower in future springs. Some bulbs – including crocuses and scillas – can be planted beneath deciduous trees; these bulbs are able to satisfy most of their light needs before the trees leaf out. (Specific requirements are provided in this pamphlet for each kind of bulb we offer.)
- 2: Drainage.** All bulbs, with the exception of leucojum and camassia, need good drainage; never plant bulbs where water collects. The drainage of heavy clay soils can be improved by digging in organic matter such as compost.

Planting

There are two principal methods of planting bulbs.

- 1: Planting a bed.** Excavate the area to be planted and loosen the soil in the bottom. Set the bulbs in the bed. Replace the soil (gently at first, to avoid knocking the bulbs out of position). If the soil is dry, water thoroughly.
- 2: Planting bulbs individually.** Dig a hole with a trowel, auger, or bulb planter. Drop the bulb (or bulbs – small bulbs such as those of *eranthis* and *anemones* can be planted in threes, fours, or more) into the hole. Replace the soil. If the soil is dry, water thoroughly after planting.

Note: Don't worry too much about which end is up on a bulb. With the exception of irises, bulbs know to send shoots up and roots down. They will grow and bloom even if you plant them upside down.

Watering

Bulbs need consistent moisture from fall, when they make new roots, until they finish flowering in spring. If the soil is dry at planting time, water thoroughly after planting. Thereafter water only if rainfall is scarce. Stop watering after the bulbs bloom. Supplemental irrigation after bloom – especially in the Deep South – may cause bulbs to rot.

Fertilizing

The bulbs we ship already have next year's flowers set inside them, so there's no need to fertilize at planting time. To grow and flower well in future springs, bulbs need access to nutrients in the soil. Most soils contain these nutrients in sufficient abundance. If you find that your bulbs (or other garden plants) are not growing well, we suggest that you have your soil tested to identify deficiencies and that you correct those deficiencies with an organic fertilizer, which will release nutrients slowly. You can generally do without fertilizer entirely if you mulch your bulbs with 2–3 inches of an organic material such as compost, shredded bark, aged wood chips, pine straw, or shredded leaves, and freshen it as needed.

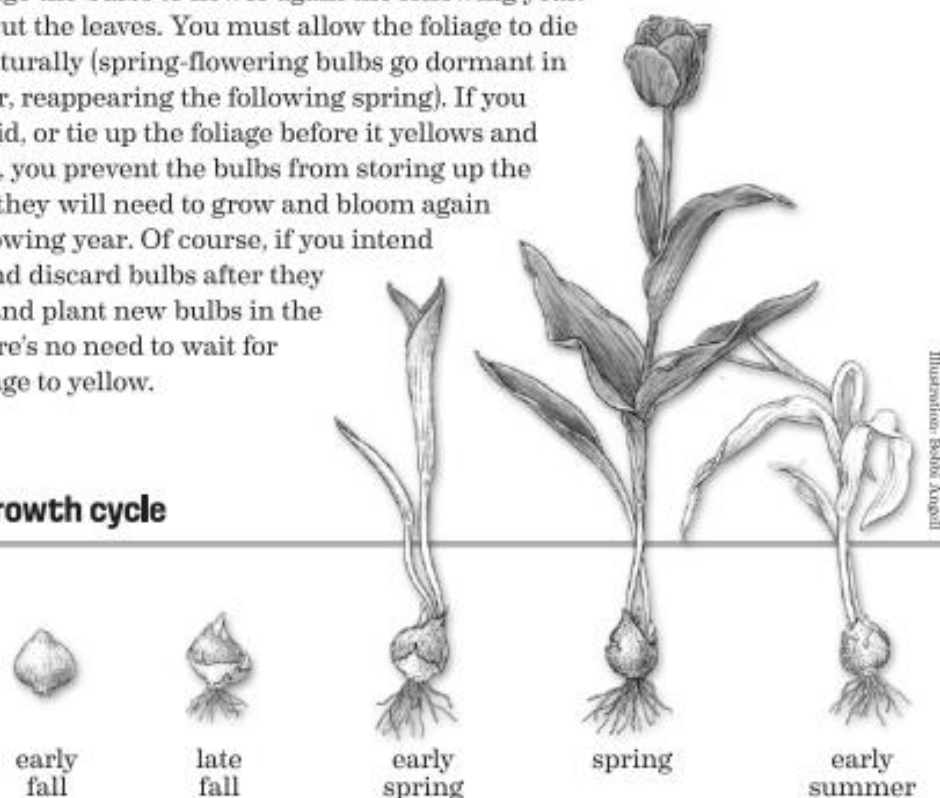
Note: If you use mulch, you can reduce the planting depth for your bulbs. The denser the mulch, the greater the reduction, but as a rule of thumb, 2 inches of mulch is equivalent to 1 inch of soil.

Caring for Your Bulbs After They Bloom

After your bulbs bloom, you may remove the spent flowers or seed heads if they are unsightly. In the case of tulips, removing the seed heads may also help to encourage the bulbs to flower again the following year.

Do *not* cut the leaves. You must allow the foliage to die back naturally (spring-flowering bulbs go dormant in summer, reappearing the following spring). If you cut, braid, or tie up the foliage before it yellows and withers, you prevent the bulbs from storing up the energy they will need to grow and bloom again the following year. Of course, if you intend to lift and discard bulbs after they bloom and plant new bulbs in the fall, there's no need to wait for the foliage to yellow.

Bulb growth cycle



Tulip Singles

Plant 5/square foot, 5" deep, 4" apart.

- **Plant the bulbs in soil that drains well.** Tulips do not perform well in heavy, wet soil.
- **Remove the spent flowers as soon as the bulbs finish blooming.** Cutting or snapping off the top few inches of the flower stem prevents seed formation and focuses energy instead on bulb growth. For a neater look, use pruning shears to remove the flower stem down to the first leaf.
- **Allow the foliage to yellow and wither completely before you remove it.** After tulips flower, their foliage stays green for three or four weeks, then turns yellow and finally tan as the bulbs enter their summer dormancy. You must let this process occur at its own pace. If you cut the foliage while it is still green, you reduce the amount of time the bulbs have to capture and store the energy needed to flower next year.
- **Avoid summer irrigation.** Tulips prefer to be dry during their dormancy. They come from parts of the world that receive very little rainfall during summer. In constantly moist soil, tulip bulbs are prone to rot.

Please note: The bulbs will flower the first spring after planting. Perennial tulips could come back and flower again in future springs, but we do not guarantee it. Even if you follow the suggestions provided above, perennial tulips may not perform as well as you might wish. That is just how it is with tulips. They are not dependable after the first spring.

Single tulips mean all the tulips in these batches are all the same color.

Uncommon Daffodils

Plant 4-5/square foot, 5" deep, 4" apart. For most people, a daffodil is a yellow trumpet, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. Warning! Plant with caution. Daffodils can become a lifelong passion.

Crocuses

Hokus Crocus: Plant 3" apart (7-8 per sq ft) 3" deep
Vernal Jewels: Plant 2" apart (18-22 per sq ft) 3" deep

Plant in full sun or partial shade and well-drained soil. For earliest bloom, put crocuses in a sunny, protected location – against the south facing foundation of a house, for example. Can be planted in a lawn if you're willing to hold off on mowing until the foliage has yellowed.

Paperwhites (White Daffodils, Indoor)

Paperwhites can be planted in a commercial potting mix in a conventional pot. They can also be planted in pebbles in a bowl or similar container that does not have a drainage hole in the bottom (a clear container allows you to see the water level). The container should be at least 3 inches deep. Fill the pot or container with potting mix or pebbles to within 2 inches of the rim. Set the bulbs very close together (It's okay if they touch). Cover with additional potting mix or pebbles, leaving just the necks exposed. Water level should be just below the bottoms of the bulbs. If the bulbs sit in water, they may rot.

Place the container in a cool (50°F is ideal) place such as a closet or a basement. Cool temperatures stimulate root growth. If you don't have a cool location, set the container on the floor away from radiators or heat vents. Check the bulbs frequently and water as necessary. Do not let the bulbs dry out. When the bulbs are firmly rooted and growth begins to show (about 2 weeks after potting), move the container to a sunny window. Continue to water as needed. Paperwhites generally bloom 5-6 weeks after planting. You can stagger plantings to keep the color and fragrance coming. Store unplanted bulbs in a cool (but not freezing) location. Paperwhites are frost tender, and it's difficult to get them to flower well again indoors. We suggest that you discard the bulbs after they bloom.