



## Guide for Planting Perennials

When planting perennials, choose carefully and make sure that the spot you have picked will be a good one for the type of plant you want. Think about the sunlight, soil, and water requirements for your plants of choice. Sometimes it's good to mix in annuals as well, so that you have color year round.

Perennials can last years. Good soil is the backbone of any garden. Keep the soil fluffy and loose so that water and nutrients can reach your plants. We recommend mixing ½ and ½ premium soil conditioner and the clay soil in our area. Espoma Plant Tone is available in the garden center and this will keep your soil vibrant for 2 to 3 months when applied correctly.

## Planting – Watering – Mulching

Container grown plants should be quarter slit with a spade or knife on the sides and bottom to promote root development.

Water thoroughly and deep, at least the top 5 or 6 inches should be moist to encourage deep root growth. Water the ground and not the plant foliage. Hoses or drips are best suited. Water in the a.m. to keep mildew and root rot down to a minimum.

Keep 2 or 3 inches of mulch on top to conserve water, cut down on weeding, add nutrients to the soil, and keep soil temperatures even.

## Pinching and Deadheading

Pinch out the growing tips of perennials to encourage bushier plants and more flowers. To encourage fewer but larger blooms, pinch back the side buds and leave only the central highest bud to bloom. Deadhead the spent flowers to slow down unnecessary seed formation and allow the plant to use this energy in productive growth. Deadheading extends the blooming and growing season. Perennials will keep flowering in an attempt to set up seeds.

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## Dividing Perennials

Perennials will continue to expand each year, often losing vigor as they become overcrowded. Consequently, many will benefit from being dug up and the plant divided. Divide the plants in spring or fall (best). Carefully break the clumps into fairly large plantlets with either your hands or a knife. Do as little damage as possible to the root mass. Resettle the plants into the ground and let friends and family have unwanted plantlets.

As always, feel free to come by the garden center and ask one of our staff for help!

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