

Basic Guide to the Culture of Hostas

Where to plant. Most hostas do best in shade or partial shade. They will tolerate morning sun but not hot afternoon sun.

Any good garden soil is appropriate for growing hostas. Humus or peat moss and sand should be added to heavy clay soil. Compost must be incorporated into sandy soil to lessen its porousness and to increase water retention.

Hostas should be planted in well-drained soil. One method of achieving adequate drainage in problem areas is to prepare a raised bed 3 to 6 inches above ground level.

Hostas grow well at the base of most trees. Try to avoid nut trees as hostas and nut trees don't mix well.

When to plant. Hostas do well if planted in the spring before the soil temperature reaches 65 degrees. In the fall you need to plant 4 weeks prior to the ground freezing to alleviate heaving.

How to plant. If you cannot plant immediately after receiving these plants, place them in a cool location, your refrigerator vegetable drawer is best. Keep the roots moist. *before* planting we suggest that you soak in water 4-6 hours.

We suggest that you work the soil 8-10 inches deep, into a good loose condition. Incorporate into the hole a mixture of good garden soil and compost. Make a mound in the center of the hole, and place the plant on top of the mound spreading the roots around the mound. The crown of the plant should be placed at ground level. Work the soil around the roots as you cover the plant. Be sure to pack the soil well. Water well. Hosta requires water every three to four days for the first two weeks and then at least an inch of rain a week.

Hostas should be planted between 18 inches and two feet apart on each side. Some varieties multiply very fast, and the clumps will become crowded if planted too close.

I do not divide my hostas until they have grown very large and the center begins to die out. I like large clumps and showy foliage. If you like smaller clumps divide more often.

Lily Bulb Cultural Instructions

(Asiatic, Oriental and Trumpet Lilies)

Soil and Location: Lilies require a well-drained soil. Compost, peat moss or other organic materials can be worked into heavy soils to improve drainage. Another solution to poor drainage is planting on a gently slope, in raised beds, or on hills. Do not plant in low wet spots. Plant in groupings of three or more for a good show and added support for the tall stems.

Sun or Shade: Lilies prefer sunlight. Although full sun until mid-afternoon is optimal, lilies will perform quite acceptably with filtered sunlight or partial shade. Lilies in shade will tend to reach for the sun and may require staking for support. Avoid planting near walks or walls that reflect the hot afternoon sun.

Planting Depth: Cover the nose of the bulb with 3 to 5 inches of soil. This allows for good stem rooting and protects against winter cold. Plant pointed end up.

Mulch and Ground Covers: Lilies like cool roots. Planting with shallow rooted ground covers or among other perennials helps shade the soil and looks nice. Lilies are extremely hardy, but in the coldest areas a mulch of straw or pine needles provides added insurance against winter injury. Mulches also keep the soil moist and cool in summer.

Cutting Flowers: Leave at least 8" to 12" of the stem and foliage to provide for bulb growth and next year's flowers. Not cutting the stems at all gives maximum bulb growth, but provided a portion of the stem remains and is kept green and healthy, lilies will come back year after year even if used for cut flowers.

Fertilizers: A handful of bone meal mixed in the soil at planting gives the bulbs a good start. Lilies benefit from a feeding in the early spring and prior to their active growth. Use a balanced mix such as 10-10-10, or a plant food developed for bulbs. Avoid heavy feeding with high nitrogen fertilizers as it makes them susceptible to disease and can cause the foliage to burn. Do not use manures!

Insects and Disease: Aphids and fungus can be controlled with the same sprays used for roses should they become a problem. Good growing practices and site location will prevent most disease and insect problems. New growth should also be protected from deer and rabbits, which are particularly attracted to the Oriental Lilies.

On Arrival: Bulbs can be stored in the refrigerator or other cool place (34° to 40° F) until planting. Unlike other bulbs, lilies are never completely dormant and should be planted as soon as possible after receipt.

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Basic Guides to the Culture of Daylilies, Iris, Lilies, and Hostas

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Basic Guide to the Culture of Daylilies

What is a daylily? The daylily is a member of the lily family as are such other plants as onions and hyacinths, but it is not a lily. Its botanical name is HEMEROCALLIS, derived from two Greek words meaning "beauty" and "day". Individual blooms are generally open for only a day, but there are successive flowers for a number of days during the blooming season.

The daylily is a fibrous-rooted, hardy, herbaceous perennial. Roots are finger-like in appearance, varying in size from tiny and threadlike to large, rounded, fleshy. There is a crown at the junction where the roots and leaves join. The foliage is narrow and long, and grows more or less in the shape of a fan.

Where to plant. Most daylilies bloom best in full sun. They will tolerate partshade conditions, but require a minimum of six hours of direct sun per day. Many red and purple varieties benefit from partial shade in the hottest part of the day since dark colors absorb heat and do not withstand the sun as well as lighter colors. Pink daylilies need to be planted in full sun to obtain their beautiful pink coloring. Any good garden soil is appropriate for growing daylilies. Humus or peat moss and sand should be added to heavy clay soil. Compost must be incorporated into sandy soil to lessen its porousness and to increase water retention.

Daylilies should be planted in well drained soil. One method of achieving adequate drainage in problem areas is to prepare raised beds, 3-6 inches above ground level.

Daylilies do not grow well near broad leafed tree, such as oaks, since the tree roots rob the soil of moisture and nutrients. Daylilies do perform admirably near and under pine trees. The daylilies benefit from the dappled shade offered by the pines and are not denied proper moisture and nutrients, since the pine root system is deep in the soil.

When to plant. Anytime is the best time to plant daylilies, provided you get them in the ground 6-8 weeks before severe freezes. If winters are severe, plant evergreens only in the spring or summer so that they can become well established before winter. Cut off winter damage foliage early in the spring before new growth begins.

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(Daylily Cultural Instructions continued)

How to plant. If you cannot plant immediately after receiving a shipment of daylilies, place your plants in cool location; keep moss damp; stand plants upright, or cover their roots with sand in shady place. This will keep them safe for a few days. BEFORE PLANTING, soak plants in water for 4-6 hours, having added a little liquid fertilizer in the water.

The soil where you plan to plant your daylilies should be worked into a good loose condition to a depth of at least a foot. Incorporate in the hole a mixture of compost, good garden soil, peat moss, sand or well rotted manure (whatever is available for a good loose growing medium). Make a mound in the center of the hole. Set the plant in place with the roots spread on each side of the mound.

You should not plant the crown (the point where foliage and root join), more than one inch below the surface of the soil. Work the soil around and between the roots as you cover the plant. Firm the soil and water well. Make sure there are no air pockets. Daylilies should be spaced between 18 inches and two feet apart on each side. Some varieties multiply very fast, and your clumps will become crowded if planted too close to each other.

Foliage Growth: Daylilies have three types of foliage habit:

DORMANT – these daylilies lose their foliage leaves completely in winter.

EVERGREEN - these daylilies retain their green foliage throughout the year, unless there is severe weather (freezing for several days in a row).

SEMI-EVERGREEN – some lose part or most of their foliage in the winter.

As a general rule, many evergreens will not grow in cold climates and many dormant will not perform well in the hottest climates. There are always exceptions to the rule.

Winter Protection. Evergreen type daylilies should be mulched in the northern states for protection against winter weather. In mulching “nestle” the loose, non-sogging mulching material, rather than smothering. Daylilies set in the late fall should be mulched. We do not recommend the evergreen type daylily for the northern regions as they winterkill so very easily. They can be grown in the north if you wish to mulch them each winter.

General Garden Care. Remove wilted flowers daily for a neat garden unless you wish to have the plants set seeds for your hybridizing program. The removal of the wilted flowers is not necessary as they fall from the plant in a day or two. Through the hottest part of the summer, water daylilies heavily to increase size of flowers and to give good color in the flowers. In the spring do not remove the dead foliage from the daylily until all dangers of late frost are gone. These dead leaves are nature’s way of mulching and protecting the daylily plants from the

extreme cold. The arching leaves or foliage of the daylilies shade the soil during the hot summer months. The most important key to success is moisture. We like to be sure they never wilt so they keep growing.

This information has been taken from the handbook *“Daylilies - Everything You’ve Always Wanted To Know About Daylilies”* published by the American Hemerocallis Society.

All interested persons are invited to join the **American Hemerocallis Society**. Individual dues are \$18.00 per year or family \$22.00. Send to Elly Launius, Executive secretary, 1454 Rebel Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211.

Basic Guide to the Culture of Iris

To the Beginner. Iris is one of the easiest perennials to grow. They survive with less care and reward you with fine bloom with a minimum of attention. These few suggestions are all simple and proper care is very easy.

Soil Preparation. Work soil well to a depth of 10 to 12 inches. If soil is heavy, incorporate sand or compost so moisture percolates out quickly. The soil should not be acid. If it is, apply lime, otherwise no lime is recommended. In the preparation of your new iris bed, spade in a good application of compost below the roots. Well-processed compost is ideal. The compost furnishes humus and valuable soil organisms.

Fertilizer. Iris will thrive without feeding, but will respond to its application. A nice garden soil will grow fine iris. Use care not to get nitrogenous material on or near the roots, rot may start. An application of a balanced (12-12-12) fertilizer applied as a top dressing dusted around and in between the plants in early spring is desirable. Steamed bone meal and super-phosphate are fine top dressing materials. It is easy to overdo iris fertilizing, but undesirable to omit feeding entirely.

Cultivating. Do it shallowly. Iris roots are very near the surface. Keep your iris free of weeds and do not allow neighboring plants to encroach upon them. Remember they should have sunlight right down to the rhizome. Remove the outer leaves as they begin to brown. At all times keep liter, old iris leaves, grasses, etc. away from the rhizomes. Clean cultivation is the finest precaution against iris troubles.

When to plant. For best results plant during July through September. Early planting establishes the new iris plants before winter. This is the time to reset clumps of iris that are crowded, generally clumps 3 to 4 years old. In the extreme heat of the south, it is more advisable to plant after the extremes of summer heat are over. September is recommended

Where to plant. The ideal location for your iris is a sunny, well-drained location. A minimum of a half day of sunshine is recommended. Iris will not do well in the shade. No water should stand in your iris beds. Raise the beds slightly above the level of your garden paths if necessary.

Depth to plant. Place the rhizomes just below the surface of the

ground with the roots well spread out underneath so the rhizome is within reach of the warmth of the sun’s rays while the roots beneath are in the moist (not soggy) soil. Be sure to firm the soil tightly around each rhizome when planting. Follow ordinary garden practice of watering and setting soil on newly set plants.

Watering. Depends on location. Newly set plants need moisture so they can grow a new root system. They appreciate this attention. Water at fairly long intervals in dry weather. Established plants do not require watering except in very arid parts of the country. The common mistake is to give the iris too much water.

General Garden Care. We prefer to cultivate shallowly after each rain when the ground has dried sufficiently. As the iris grow, the outside foliage becomes limp. We remove these outside leaves every so often – particularly about two weeks after blooming time. We do not trim the iris foliage on established plants except to cut off some leaf spot should that show up. Bloom stems are cut level with the ground after blooming on a dry day so the cut heals quickly.

Should old clumps be thinned? Yes, after they become crowded, about every four years. Dig up clumps, remove and discard the old center divisions that have blossomed and replant the fresh, larger foliage fans after the soil has been renovated. If you wish, the old center rhizomes and the smaller fans may be grown in a nursery row for a year and cut into single or double units.

Winter Protection. We strongly advocate protective winter covering, particularly in the most northern sections. A light covering of marsh hay, straw or a similar weed-free litter is highly advised. Newly set plants in particular must be protected as a preventative to the injury caused by freezing and thawing.

Remove covering when spring growth begins. Late planted irises should have a brick placed on top of rhizome after the first hard freeze to prevent heaving.

Leaf Spot. Easily recognized from characteristic brown spots on foliage. Treatment: remove and burn diseased portions; spray or dust with Bordeaux at strength recommended for roses, or a spray of 2 teaspoons of Clorox per quart of water is effective. In case of sprays use a good sticker so spray adheres to foliage.



Before planting a new bed of iris, dig in plant food and cultivate well. When ready to plant, dig two slanting holes, leaving a dividing ridge in the center.

Place the rhizome directly over the center of the ridge and spread the feeding roots to either side, so the plant is securely anchored.

Pull dirt towards plant from either side. By pressing on top of root, proper planting depth may be regulated. Firm with foot and water well.