



Garden Prep for Spring Planting Bulbs

Spring Planting Bulbs are relatively easy to plant and grow. When choosing your area to plant, remember the first golden rule of bulbs: **good drainage is essential**. Bulbs will simply rot in wet, water retentive soil so it is best to choose an area that is rich in organic matter and well drained. Loosening the soil, working in organic matter to a depth of 30 cm / 12" and/or mixing in coarse sand will help create the ideal bed for your bulbs.

On each Botanus plant package you will find a detailed label giving you vital zone rating information, sun exposure requirements, planting depth and spacing for the variety you've chosen. This information is very useful in helping you to decide where and how to plant your bulbs. Plant your bulbs, roots down, to the appropriate depth and spacing as indicated on the package labeling. With some bulbs it is difficult to tell which is the root end, so when in doubt plant them on their sides. You can either dig individual holes for each bulb or plant entire groups of bulbs in one large hole. There is no need to add fertilizer to the newly dug holes, however, a nice topdressing of organic fertilizer is always recommended for newly planted sites. Once your bulbs are in the ground and covered with soil be sure to water them well.

After your bulbs have bloomed in the summer it is absolutely essential that the foliage is allowed to die back naturally. This allows the bulbs to store enough energy to produce a flower the following summer season. Avoid the temptation to cut off yellowing foliage before it has completely died back.

Keep in mind that your Spring Planting Bulbs (with the exception of Lilies and some Unusuals) are not generally winter hardy and must be dug up in the fall and stored over the winter in a frost free area. When in doubt, check the package label for its zone rating - depending on your climate zone you will be able to immediately see whether or not you need to lift and store your bulbs.

To over-winter bulbs, dig them up in the fall when the leaves have yellowed and died. Allow them to dry in a shady spot for a couple of days, brushing off any remaining dirt. Store the bulbs dry, packed in either peat moss, vermiculite or in net bags and keep them in a cool, dry place. In the case of container potted bulbs, gradually reduce watering once the leaves begin to yellow in the fall and store them right in their pots in a cool, dry place. Be sure to inspect your bulbs a couple of times during the winter season. If you discover a rotted section cut it away and dust the cuts with sulfur. Once spring arrives and the last frost has past, you can then re-pot or directly plant your bulbs in the garden and enjoy another season of colourful growth!