

Botanus

Fall Bulb Planting Guide

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Everyone at Botanus wishes you
a wonderful fall season and
all the best for the autumn months!
The utmost care has been taken in processing your order.

We ask that you check the contents
of your package immediately upon receipt
and notify us as soon as possible should you discover
any discrepancies or errors.

**Thank you again for your order and
Happy Gardening!**

BŌTANUS
CARE INSPIRE GROW

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Your bulbs have been shipped to you according to your climate zone so that you receive them at the right time for planting in your area. Because of this, we **strongly suggest planting your bulbs as soon as possible**. If you cannot get them into the garden right away, you should open the packages to allow for better air circulation and store them in a cool, dry, preferably dark place. Keep in mind, however, that if you choose to store your bulbs before planting, these are **live plants that are perishable**. If you have to store them before planting we highly recommend keeping this time to an absolute minimum!

When choosing your area to plant remember the first golden rule of bulbs: **good drainage is essential!** 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. Planting them in containers or in raised beds are other ways you can ensure good drainage conditions. Plant your bulbs, roots down, to the appropriate depth and spacing as indicated on the package labeling. Once your bulbs are in the ground and covered with soil be sure to water them well.

For colder zones we suggest planting your bulbs somewhat deeper than recommended on the packaging and covering the entire bed with a thick layer of mulch – bark chips, leaves, tree boughs, etc. The mulch can then be removed in the spring when the threat of frost has passed.

Once your bulbs have bloomed in the spring 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 season.

Although bulbs carry a season's supply of food, after the first season of blooms they don't mind a bit of help. In the fall, if you are planting the bulbs for the first time, no fertilizer is required. After the first season of blooms they benefit from an organic compost or a slow release bulb food.

ALLIUM

All species of Allium require well-drained soil. A sunny habitat is best for most species, but a few also grow beautifully in full or partial shade. See individual packages for specific requirements. To prevent them from producing seed heads, it's best to deadhead the larger Alliums (i.e. Giganteum, Globe Master, Mount Everest, etc.). Alliums propagate by producing bulblets that can be removed and planted separately from the mother bulb. It will take a few years for the bulblets to mature to a size where they themselves can produce a flower.

AMARYLLIS

Amaryllis can be forced for indoor display either atop water or planted in soil-filled pots. If you choose to force the bulb above water, follow the same instructions listed below ensuring that only the roots touch the water. Do not let the bulb itself soak in water as it will rot.

When planting in pots, choose a pot that will allow for a maximum of 5 cm - 2" space between the outside or the bulb and the edge of the pot. Amaryllis prefer to be somewhat pot bound. Now fill the pot with humus rich soil and position the bulb in the pot so that the top of the bulb sticks up about 1/3 above the layer of soil. Fill the space between the bulb and the side of the pot with the potting soil and tap down the soil firmly but not enough to damage the roots. Try not to fill the pot up completely with soil, as this makes watering somewhat difficult.

Place the Amaryllis in a cool, dark room and water sparingly until you begin to see stem growth. Once this happens move it to a warm area of your home (20°C) preferably with good sunlight. Water should be provided sparingly at first, and then more and more generously as the flower stem develops.

As the flower stem develops, it's a good idea to rotate the pot so that the stem grows straight. It may be necessary to stake the bulb once the flowers bloom, as they are sometimes so large that they can cause the pot to topple over! As the flowers fade cut them off and once the last flower has been spent you can cut the entire flower stem off, close to the bulb. Other stems may develop after the initial flowering. Eventually leaves will also appear which should not be cut off but left to develop naturally.

You can now fertilize your Amaryllis with a liquid plant food and once summer arrives move it, pot and all, outdoors for a summer vacation! Treat it as a regular outdoor plant, watering regularly and providing it with a sunny spot. In the early fall, stop watering, cut off the leaves, remove it from the soil and keep the bulb dry indoors for about 8-10 weeks. After it has had a bit of a rest, replace the soil and repot the bulb as above. Place it in a cool, dark room and wait for the new flower shoot to appear!

Waxed Amaryllis do not require water or soil to grow. Simply place them directly on any flat surface or they can be displayed in a decorative container of your choice. At average room temperatures, they can be expected to bloom for about three weeks. These are single-use Amaryllis, and it will not bloom again in subsequent years.

ANEMONE

We strongly recommend soaking your Anemone rhizomes overnight in water at room temperature before planting. They will plump up after soaking and this will assist them in getting started in the garden. It is sometimes difficult to tell which end is up as their roots can be very tiny to distinguish. When in doubt, simply plant them on their sides. Anemones naturalize well so be sure to plant them under trees and shrubs or amongst perennials for early season colour.

BEARDED IRIS

For best results, they should be planted immediately upon arrival in early autumn. A common mistake is to plant Bearded Irises too deep. They should be planted so that the tops of the rhizomes are exposed and the roots are spread out facing downward in the soil. Firm the soil around each rhizome and then water to help settle the soil. Generally speaking, Bearded Irises that are planted closer together will need to be thinned often and plants spaced further apart will need less frequent thinning. Bearded Irises are not too fussy about soil. All they require is **good drainage and lots of sun**. Newly set plants need moisture to establish their root systems so please soak the soil immediately after planting. Once established, Bearded Irises normally don't need to be watered except in arid areas. Over-watering is a common error and can lead to rot.

Important Note for Colder Zones 3-5: It is essential that your Bearded Irises be protected from the harsh winter climate. At time of planting we strongly suggest covering the entire rhizome with a thick layer of mulch. As soon as the snows begin to melt in the spring, you must remove this mulch layer thus exposing the top of the rhizome to the sun. If the mulch layer is left on top of the rhizome it will act as a sponge, retaining water and the rhizome could begin to rot.

CALLA AETHIOPICA

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Select a site that has rich, moist soil in full sun to partial shade. These particular callas will grow in boggy soil and in water up to a depth of 30 cm - 12" so they are ideal as marginal plants along the edges of water gardens. Where hardy (zone 8-10) callas can be grown outdoors and elsewhere they can be over-wintered indoors in containers or by digging them in the fall. Be sure to feed your container grown callas every 2 weeks with a balanced fertilizer.

CAMASSIA

Camassia prefer to be planted in rich, moist soil and can be planted near streams or ponds but the bulbs must be above the water line. Wet, waterlogged soil, especially during the winter months, can be fatal so be sure to choose your site well. Once established, they prefer not to be moved and clumps are best left undisturbed.

CHIONODOXA

Choose a site with well-drained soil in a spot that provides full sun. You can also plant them in a partial to full shade area under deciduous trees so that the plants receive full sun during the spring growing season. For best effect, plant your Chionodoxa in drifts rather than singly, as clumps of 20 or more create a wonderful splash of colour. Chionodoxa are excellent naturalizers and self-sow easily if you allow them to go to seed.

CROCUS (SPRING FLOWERING)

Crocus can be planted virtually anywhere as long as there is good draining soil and full sun conditions. You can even plant them in your lawn as long as your grassy spot does not require early mowing. After flowering, allow the foliage to yellow and die back naturally before cutting it off. This will allow the bulb to store enough energy for next year's flowers. Crocus multiply with amazing speed and new corms will appear quickly.

DAFFODILS & NARCISSI

Plant your Daffodils and Narcissi in an area with full sun or in semi-shade. Well-drained soil is essential and other than that they are relatively easy to grow and require minimal maintenance. Daffodils and Narcissi multiply quickly and you should, therefore, allow enough room between the bulbs for the developing offsets. They do fine with a minimum of watering and they'll grow in sandy to loamy soil and will tolerate acid to alkaline conditions. In colder zones it's best to plant them somewhat deeper than what is recommended on the packaging and to cover the beds in the fall with coarse mulch that will add extra winter protection. Once established in your garden, they will need to be separated as overcrowding can have a negative effect on blooms. For Indoor Narcissi please refer to the Hyacinths-Prepared information on page 5.

ERANTHIS

Moisture is the key to keeping your Eranthis healthy and happy. It begins with soaking them overnight and then planting your Eranthis as soon as possible. Eranthis should be planted in rich, moist soil in a full sun to partially shady site. They are ideal for naturalizing and once established they form large drifts. Moisture is necessary all year so we recommend mulching in summer with well-rotted compost to keep the soil rich and moist. Once established, clumps are best left undisturbed. If they become overcrowded they can be divided in late spring once the foliage dies back.

EREMURUS

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Eremurus are odd looking tubers that have a central crown surrounded by roots that shoot out from the side giving them an octopus-like appearance. Sandy soil is ideal for these tall growing tubers and they prefer a site in full sun that is protected from the wind. The tubers need to be planted in a wide hole so that the outstretched roots can spread easily. **Drainage is extremely important** so we suggest setting the tuber and its roots on top of a layer of coarse sand. Plants begin growing in very early spring and late frosts can damage the top growth.

To avoid frost damage, cover the bed with a thick layer of compost in late fall. If the plants begin to emerge in too early in the spring (when there is still a chance of frost) cover the new growth with mulch or leaves. You can also place a cardboard box over them in the evenings to protect the new, tender shoots. Once planted they are best left undisturbed.

ERYTHRONIUM

Do not allow the bulbs to dry out before planting and choose a spot that offers dappled shade and rich organic matter in the soil. Set the tooth-like roots upright, not lengthwise, and cover with at least 8 cm - 3" of soil and mulch the bed with chopped leaves, compost or shredded bark in order to keep the soil rich, moist and cool.

FALL FLOWERING BULBS

Fall flowering bulbs should be planted in early autumn. The sooner they are in the ground after you receive them, the better. As a rule of thumb, bulbs should be planted twice as deep as the height of the bulb itself. Fall Flowering bulbs can be planted in any type of soil, as long as the ground is well-drained. Most Fall Flowering bulbs will not flower in the fall that they are planted. **They must over-winter in the ground and blooms will appear the following autumn.** Many of the Fall Crocus will actually produce their foliage in the spring which will then die back and the flower blooms will then appear in early autumn.

FRITILLARIA

These types of bulbs are fragile and should not be allowed to dry out before planting. Although conditions vary for each different type of Fritillaria, all will benefit from good draining soil and a compost rich mulching in the spring. Fritillaria imperialis and persica can catch moisture in the tops of the bulbs where a hole has been left from the previous years stem. Retained moisture will cause them to rot so to avoid this we suggest filling the bottoms of planting holes with gritty sand and placing the bulbs on their sides when planting. All Fritillaria are very sensitive to over-handling and bruise easily. Handle with care and provide a moist, well-drained area that is lightly shaded.

GALANTHUS

Galanthus naturalize well and do best in a partially shady site with rich, moist, well-drained soil. Try planting them under deciduous trees and in shady, woodland gardens. They will spread easily and should you choose to divide your established clumps, do so when the foliage is still green.

It's usually best to plant garlic in the fall because it likes to grow a little while before the cold winter temperatures force it to curtail its growth and rest. It uses this time to establish its root system so it can survive the winter and be ready to explode with growth in the spring before the weather turns hot. When spring arrives the following year wait for the leaves to begin dying down. When the top 6-7 leaves are the only ones still green and they start to look a little past their prime, that's the time to harvest!

GLADIOLUS BYZANTINUS

These gladioli should be planted in a sunny, warm spot in the garden. They prefer a light, fertile soil that provides good drainage. When planting, mix in a bit of complete fertilizer avoiding direct contact with the corms and cover with a layer of mulch. Gladiolus byzantinus will spread freely by producing cormlets.

HYACINTHOIDES

Hyacinthoides prefer partial or dappled shade with an average to rich, moist, well-drained soil. Since they produce an abundant amount of offsets it is a good idea to space them generously and divide clumps only if they become overcrowded and begin to bloom less. Water well, especially in the spring, as a lack of water during this important growing period can cause the bulb to produce only foliage, without any flowers.

HYACINTHS - PREPARED / INDOOR NARCISSI

Prepared bulbs such as Hyacinths and Indoor Narcissi are intended to be forced indoors during the winter months and have gone through a pre-cooling period to simulate winter dormancy. 'Forcing' is a term used to describe the process that stimulates bulbs to bloom out of season. Although Prepared bulbs have been pre-cooled they still require a rooting period of about 8-10 weeks.

You can force your Hyacinths or Indoor Narcissi above water but it is essential that only the root portion of the bulb touch the water. You may also wish to pot up your bulbs using clean pots with drainage holes allowing for at least 5 cm - 2" of soil below the bulb. Water well in order to settle the soil around the bulbs. Bulbs in pots can be planted very close together, even touching, and make the best show in 'crowded' arrangements. Place pots in a cool, dark place (5-9°C), until you begin to see flower stalks appearing. Allow the flower stalks to achieve a height of at least 5 cm - 2" before moving to a room temperature environment. Forced flowers that are removed from the cool area too soon may appear somewhat stunted in size. After blooming, Prepared bulbs cannot be forced again but can be planted outdoors where they may re-bloom within a year or two.

HYACINTHS - REGULAR

When you are unpacking your Hyacinths in preparation for planting we strongly suggest wearing rubber gloves and avoid contact of the bulb and tunics with your skin - Hyacinths bulbs can cause an itchy, rash-like sensation when touched. Choose a site in full sun to partial shade with a rich, well-drained soil that is neutral to slightly acidic. Plant to a depth of approximately 15 cm - 6" and cover the plantings with a loose mulch to protect the flower shoots when they emerge in the spring. After blooming, you can remove the faded flower stalks but it is best to allow the foliage to wither naturally. Hyacinths will propagate easily in your garden and once overcrowding sets in you can separate and replant the offsets in midsummer once the foliage has completely died back.

IPHEION

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Where hardy, plant in the fall in a soil that is moist yet well drained. They prefer a sunny location and any kind of soil as long as it's not soggy. Ipheion make excellent container plants. Pot them up in the fall with the tips about 3-5 cm/ 1-2" below the surface. Store them in a cool room and keep the soil barely moist. Move the pots outdoors once the last frost has past. After they have bloomed, water and feed regularly until the leaves die back, then store them dry until next spring.

IRIS (DUTCH)

Iris prefer a well-drained, sandy soil in full sun to perform at their best. They require dry soil during their summer dormant period. In areas where they do not receive a dry summer the bulbs will produce many small, non-flowering bulblets. In well-drained beds that are dry in the summer these bulblets will eventually reach flowering size. To help ensure dry conditions in summer, try planting them with perennials that don't require a lot of watering. Or perhaps try them in raised beds or in rock gardens.

LEUCOJUM

Select a site that is in full sun to partial shade and has rich, moist, well-drained soil. They like the hot afternoon sun but still prefer a soil that remains evenly moist. Mulch the plants with compost in the summer months in order to keep the soil moist, rich and cool. Leucojum are ideal for naturalizing but they prefer not to be disturbed once established.

LILIES

Always handle your Lily bulbs carefully as they are easily bruised or damaged. They also dry out quickly so be sure to plant them as soon as possible after receipt.

Lilies thrive best in a spot with full sun and a rich, evenly moist, well-drained soil. They need plenty of soil moisture during the growing season but be careful to provide good drainage as they are extremely susceptible to rot if the soil remains too wet.

Once planted, Lilies will easily thrive from year to year with very little extra care. When new growth is visible in the spring feed your Lilies with an organic fertilizer to stimulate and promote growth. Taller Lilies may require staking and it is best to place your stakes earlier in the season so that the flower can be supported along its entire stem. Water regularly and deadhead as the flowers fade being careful not to disturb the foliage until it has naturally yellowed and died.

MUSCARI

Muscari are wonderful naturalizers and will spread easily in your garden provided you give them a sunnier spot with rich, well-drained soil. While the foliage of most varieties dies back after spring blooming, Muscari armeniacum will actually produce new foliage again in the fall months. Plant all Muscari in clumps for best effect.

ORNITHOGALUM

Ornithogalum prefer full sun to partial shade and average to rich, well-drained soil. They are suitable for naturalizing as they spread easily. Propagate by separating offsets in the fall months.

OXALIS

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Unlike most bulbs, Oxalis are naturally soft to the touch. They prefer a site in full sun with a sandy, gritty soil that drains well. Plants will tolerate dry soil in summer but do best with a little moisture. Wet feet, however, in winter will severely damage the bulbs so be sure that the bed is well drained or, instead, plant them in containers or raised beds. Oxalis make a wonderful indoor plant!

PUSCHKINIA

Puschkinia prefer a full sun location but will also tolerate partial shade. Choose a site that is well-drained with a gritty soil. They like an area that is dry during the summer months when they are dormant. For best effect plant them in drifts rather than in a single row. Puschkinia make an excellent ground cover and/or companion plant for Narcissi.

SCILLA

Scilla prefer a sunny to partially shady environment with well-drained soil. Try planting them under deciduous trees in clumps of 10 or more bulbs. Scilla freely produce offsets and also self-sow making them ideal for naturalizing.

SNOWDROPS

Snowdrops prefer moist, humusy soils. They grow particularly well under deciduous trees where exposure to the sun is full in early spring but gradually changes to partial shade as the trees leaf out. In optimum growing conditions, they naturalize well by both self-seeding and bulb offsets. Allow foliage to yellow before removing it from garden areas. If left alone, foliage disappears by late spring as bulbs go dormant.

TULIPS

Plant your tulips in an area where they will receive at least 5 hours of sun each day. Excellent drainage is also very important so be sure to take the time to prepare your bed, ensuring it is rich in humus and has a light, sandy texture. Tulips do not require much further care to bloom well. Water if the weather is dry in the spring and deadhead before they go to seed.

Many gardeners treat Tulips as annuals - replacing or replenishing existing bulbs each fall. This is due to the fact that most Tulips reproduce slowly and bulblets produced by the mother bulb will draw energy away from it until they are mature enough to flower themselves. You will find that they bloom spectacularly the first year and then slowly peter out thereafter. You have, of course, the option of digging up your Tulips in early fall, removing any bulblets and replanting. Or, since they are relatively inexpensive, most gardeners choose to simply order new bulbs each year and replenish those that are already in the garden.

There are exceptions to the above rule, however, such as the Mini Botanical Tulips that are best known for their perennializing qualities. Kaufmanniana, Fosterianas, Greigii and Darwin Tulips have also been known to be good perennializers.

Good site selection, thorough soil preparation ensuring excellent drainage, feeding your Tulip bulbs annually with an organic compost and allowing foliage to ripen naturally will all contribute to the successful blooming and continuation of your Tulip bulbs.