

SUMMER BLOOMING BULBS

Source: www.bulb.co,

In general, summer bulbs fall into the category of tender bulbs, which do not perennialize in zones that experience frost in winter. Hardy summer bulbs like bearded iris, some lilies, hardy cyclamen (actually rhizomes, tubers or corms) are available as container plants and are usually not sold in packages.

When to Plant

Summer bloomers such as Dahlias, Begonias, Lilies, Gladiolus and Callas should be planted in late spring or Mid-May after the danger of a hard frost. Soil temperatures should be at least 13°C or 55°F. If planted too soon, the bulbs will not begin active growth which can easily cause the bulb to rot. Autumn crocuses can be planted in early summer.

Where to plant

In general, bulbs should be planted in sunny areas where the soil drainage is good. If drainage is a problem, consider amending the soil, planting on a hillside or in raised beds or in containers. In general, plant bulbs about three times and deep as their diameter. Refer to the package for variety-specific information.

Fertilizer

If you intend to dig and store your bulbs over the winter or if bulbs are perennial in your area, apply balanced fertilizer every month or so during the growing season.

Watering

Bulbs begin immediately to form their roots, so give them plenty of water, especially if the soil is dry or during a dry period.

Staking

Some of the summer blooming bulbs like dahlias and gladioli occasionally need extra support. Drive in stakes or supports at planting time to avoid damage to the bulbs or tubers.

Post Bloom

Cut the flowers off as soon as they've faded, but leave the foliage and stems to bring energy back to the bulb for next year. Deadheading will encourage them to re-bloom. After foliage dies back, dig up the bulbs from the ground and shake off any soil that clings to the bulbs. Store bulbs on a slightly moistened layer of peat moss or sawdust in a cool dry place. Wash and separate them just before planting. If you leave your bulbs in the ground over winter, protect by covering with evergreens or mulch.

TIP: If the lifting/storing process sounds too cumbersome, enjoy your plant as a summer annual. Our growing season is relatively short, so you can enjoy a longer period of bloom by purchasing container plants instead.