



*Gardeners Helping Gardeners Succeed*

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# Planting & Caring for Amaryllis

## **Planting Time**

Use a pot that is two inches larger in diameter than the bulb, i.e. a 4 inch bulb would require a 6 inch pot. The soil should be light and airy, such as Uni Grow Potting Soil. Place the bulb in the soil so that the upper 1/2 is exposed. Firm soil gently, do not pack. After potting, water thoroughly.

Place the newly planted bulb on a sunny window ledge in a cool room (55-65° F). Water only when top layer of soil in the container feels very dry to the touch. If the soil is kept overly moist the bulb will rot. As the roots develop and fill the container, the top layer of soil will dry more quickly and the frequency of watering should increase accordingly. In approximately 6-7 weeks flower buds will emerge. They may appear before or after foliage has appeared. Once growth begins rotate the pot to create a strong straight stem. If the plant requires staking, be careful placing stake as to not damage the bulb or roots. Once blooms appear move the plant from direct sunlight and keep in cool room after blossoms have opened.

After blooms have faded, remove the flowers but do not cut off the flower stalk or any of the foliage. Place the plant back on a sunny windowsill and continue watering thoroughly when the top layer of soil feels dry to the touch. It is essential to keep the foliage growing vigorously since it produces the food for the following year's blossoms.

After the last frost plunge the potted amaryllis into the ground up to the rim of the container. The plant should be placed in an area which receives direct morning sunlight and partial shade during the afternoon. While the plant is outdoors check the soil each day to see if watering is needed and regularly apply a water soluble chemical fertilizer at the strength and frequency recommended on the label.

## **Flowers for the next season**

Before the first autumn frost bring the plant back indoors. By this time the foliage may have completely yellowed. If so, cut off the yellow leaves and flower stalk, withhold water allowing the soil to dry completely, store the bulb in its' container in a cool dry room (40-50° F), and do not water for about 4 months. If the foliage is still green, continue to grow the plant on a sunny window ledge, still watering when necessary until plant completely yellows.

After the bulb has been subjected to a 4 month cool dry period carefully scrape the top pad of soil out of the container, replace it with fresh medium, water thoroughly and repeat the process described above.

Amaryllis can be propagated from off-sets, also known as bulbils, which develop during the growing season and are attached to the mother bulb. When the bulbils are 1/4 to 1/3 the size of the mother bulb they can be separated with the fingers or a sharp knife and potted separately. Bulbils will usually flower in 2-3 years. Propagate after the 4 month cool dry period.

## **Bulb Origin**

Amaryllis bulbs that are grown in the southern hemisphere (Brazil, Peru, South Africa), typically flower from November through December. These are usually known as “early” or “Christmas blooming” amaryllis. Bulbs that are grown in Holland bloom later, usually starting in January and continuing through March.

## **Variety**

Like most bulbs, amaryllis go through a dormancy period that lasts between 3 and 6 months. During this time, the plants finish developing their flowers, using energy they stored during the growing season. Natural dormancy periods vary, which is why some varieties of amaryllis bloom before others.

When considering the lists below, note that some varieties of amaryllis are grown in both the northern and southern hemisphere. If you want to purchase bulbs that will bloom in November or December make sure they were grown in the southern hemisphere.

### **Holiday season varieties:**

[Apple Blossom](#), [Barbados](#), [Black Pearl](#), [Bolero](#), [Cherry Nymph](#), [Denver](#), [Design](#), [Double King](#), [Full House](#), [Ice Queen](#), [Mandela](#), [Merry Christmas](#), [Minerva](#), [Olaf](#), [Ragtime](#), [Red Lion](#)

### **Early winter varieties:**

[Minerva](#), [Cherry Nymph](#), [Magic Green](#), [Evergreen](#)

### **Mid-winter varieties:**

[Apple Blossom](#), [Splash](#), [Double King](#), [Exotica](#), [White Nymph](#), [Ragtime](#), [Merry Christmas](#), [Full House](#)

### **Late winter varieties:**

[Red Pearl](#), [Red Lion](#), [Spartacus](#), [Amorice](#), [Nymph](#), [Christmas Gift](#), [Lagoon](#), [Barbados](#), [Black Pearl](#)