



# Planting & Growing Bulbs

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Give your garden the Dutch touch by following these simple guidelines for growing bulbs:

## PLANTING BULBS

Plant bulbs in well drained soil, such as top soil mix or humus planting mix, or combine these products and cotton burr compost with existing soil. Dust the bulb or tuber lightly with dusting sulfur before planting. When planting, mix one tablespoon of Bone Meal in soil below the bulb or tuber. A two-inch layer of pine bark mulch will cool the bulb's root area and help prevent weed growth.

When the bulb sprouts above ground, feed with Dutch bulb food and continue feeding regularly per label directions to ensure blooms for the next year.

Bulbs may be stored in a cool location for one to two months before planting date.

## GROWING BULBS INDOORS

Indoor bulbs are first grown outdoors in the shade to provide as much cooling time as possible. This allows root growth before top growth begins. In Texas and other warm weather areas, the most common causes for failure with containerized bulbs are warm winters with equally warm homes.

Tulips, crocus, hyacinths, muscari, narcissus, daffodils, and amaryllis are the most commonly used bulbs for container growing, but any bulb can be containerized. All bulbs, except tulips, crocus, and hyacinths, may be planted as is. These three bulbs need to be refrigerated a minimum of six to eight weeks prior to planting. Do not store bulbs in the freezer or vegetable sections of your refrigerator and do not store them in plastic bags — use paper bags.

## GROWING BULBS IN CONTAINERS

**1. Gravel or small pebbles** (hyacinths and narcissus only): Fill a clear or translucent, shallow container with gravel or small pebbles. Carefully place the bulb 1/2 way

into the gravel. Use as many bulbs as will fit without touching each other or the sides of the container.

Fill with tepid water to just below but not touching the bottom of the bulbs. Keep the water level constant.

Place the container outdoors in the coolest dark available. If bulbs are too warm, you will end up with beautiful foliage but no blooms. When growth reaches four" in height, gradually move the container into more light. Too much light too fast will cause excess foliage growth, robbing the bulb of the energy needed to produce blooms.

**2. Hyacinth vase** (hyacinths and narcissus only): Place the bulb in the cup of the vase. Fill the vase with tepid water to just below but not touching the base of the bulb. Keep water level constant.

**3. Potting soil** (all bulbs): Place bulbs so their tips are just below the pot rim and fill the pot without allowing bulbs to touch the side or each other. Avoid pressing bulbs into the soil as it can damage the bulbs bases which will hinder root growth.

Water well and feed with Dutch bulb food, following label directions.

Set containers in a cool, shady location until the bulbs sprout — generally six to ten weeks later, depending on the variety. Bring the bulbs indoors just as buds begin to open, but keep them out of full sun while flowering to help prolong blooming.