

Hardy Chrysanthemums

Hardy Chrysanthemums, or Garden Mums, are popular plants that have been used in the gardens of China since before 550 B.C. Their blooms brighten garden beds and borders from early August through November with blooms that often last for many weeks. Some varieties begin blooming earlier than others. Mums come in a wide assortment of colors including white, many shades of yellow, pink, lavender, red and bronze. Today, mums are a large part of the fall harvest season and are a great way to brighten and bring color to any spot in the garden. Mums are also great for use in containers, window boxes and around front entryways.

How To Plant Mums

- Select a sunny, well-drained spot in the garden or choose an appropriate container.
- If planting in the ground, enrich the soil by mixing in a generous quantity of compost or peat moss, a cup of bone meal and lime (if needed; mums like a pH of 6.2-7.0). Work it all into the soil to a depth of at least 8-12". In window boxes or containers, use a good potting mix such as Pro-Mix.
- Remove your mums from their containers by tapping the bottom and sides of the containers and gently pulling the plants out. Mums that are growing in fiber pots can be planted without removing them from their containers.
- Plant mums no deeper than they were in their container. If the root mass is dense, gently tease apart

the outer roots so they can more readily grow into the new soil. Firm the soil around the roots.

- Water them in well. Check and water as needed; never let newly planted mums in bloom or bud dry out.

In The Spring

In mid-March, remove the mulch from the base of each plant to allow the sun to warm the soil and trigger new growth. Fertilize with a good granular fertilizer like 5-10-5 or 10-10-10. Continue to fertilize every 4-6 weeks through September.



Pruning (Pinching) and Disbudding

To keep plants dense and for maximum flower production, mums should be pinched occasionally. Pinching is a form of pruning used to remove the end or terminal buds.

Just place your thumb and index finger below a terminal bud and squeeze until the bud is removed. Do this all over the top and sides of the plant. Start when plants are 4-6" tall, repeating every 4-6 weeks or as needed until around July^{4th}. Flower buds will begin to form shortly thereafter so no more pinching is needed.

For larger individual flowers, when flower buds form, selectively remove all stems except 4 or 5 of the strongest stems. Energy will be redirected to these buds, resulting in fewer but larger flowers per plant.

After Blooming

After the flowers fade and the foliage dies back (mid to late-December), cut your mums down to the ground and mark or label the location of each individual plant.

Apply a 3-4" layer of organic mulch (shredded cedar, pine bark, wood chips, etc) to protect the roots during the winter and to prevent them from heaving in the freezing and thawing of the earth.

Shopping List

To Plant Mums You Need:

- Compost or peat moss
- Bone meal
- Lime
- Labels or markers

Making New Plants

For best appearance and productivity mums should be dug and divided every 2 or 3 years. This can be done in late-March or April when new growth is 4-6" high.

Dig up the mum clumps with a fork or shovel. Separate the shoots from the mother plant with a sharp knife. Each shoot should include 1-2" of roots. Plant the new plants following instructions outlined above; discard the old clump. Pinch the plants when they become established.

Mums are also easily propagated (rooted) from stem cuttings taken in the spring from new, vigorous growth.

HARDY CHRYSANTHEMUMS



CATEGORIES OF MUMS

Single:	Daisy-like flower.
Button:	Pompom flower that is 1 inch or less across.
Spoons:	Odd shaped flower with long rays in a spoon shape.
Cushion:	Double flower, low bushy habit plant.
Pompoms:	Round flower, 2" or less across.
Anemones:	Contrasting outer rays/inner fluffy eye.
Decorative:	Double flowers with 'strap-like' petals (rays).
Rayonettes:	'Spider mums' – open flower with long narrow rays.
Commercial:	'Football' mums, large softball size flowers.

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