

Hydrangea paniculata

A large, late blooming species, its cultivars have been planted in American gardens for more than a century. These Hydrangeas are unobtrusive until mid/late summer when they produce huge, pyramidal off-white flowers that seem to glow brightly for several weeks before turning pink. The flower heads are excellent cut, either fresh or dried. They are hardy in zone 3-8 (on LI we are in zone 7).

'Grandiflora' (Pee Gee Hydrangea) can eventually grow 10 to 15 feet tall and wide. Blooming from mid-summer into fall, the cream color flowers turn to a rosy pink. A 'tree hydrangea' is a Hydrangea paniculata 'Grandiflora' plant that has been pruned using different techniques to create a tree-shape (these are available already pruned to a tree-shape by our growers).

'Tardiva' is a variant; it has a more diminutive flower form and blooms from late summer into fall.



Pruning Paniculatas

Since flowers bloom on new growth, this Hydrangea can be pruned in the early spring; this will encourage a more compact growth as well as larger cone-shaped flowers.

Climbing Hydrangea

Hydrangea anomala petiolaris

This is a large (50-80 ft.) woody vine that has dark green, heart-shaped foliage. Beginning in June and continuing into July, lacy, flat-topped clusters of 6-10 inch wide creamy-white flowers appear in abundance. Climbing Hydrangeas grow in full sun or shade but need rich, moist, well-drained soil. They require a structure such as an arbor, trellis or fence to grow on. They will also

climb up a tree trunk into the canopy of the tree. Slow to grow in the first few years, after which they grow more vigorously; fertilize for maximum growth. They are hardy zone 5-8 (on LI we are in zone 7).



Pruning Climbing Hydrangeas

These usually require little or no pruning except for cutting back shoots in the summer that have grown out of bounds.

Care of Hydrangeas

Most Hydrangeas can grow in either sun or partial shade (they like moist, well-drained, moderately fertile, humus-rich soil). Apply a 2-3 inch layer of mulch to keep soil cool and moist in summer.

Water your Hydrangeas deeply once a week during summer droughts.

Hydrangeas need feeding once a year in spring or late fall; use a well-balanced fertilizer such as 5-10-5 or an equivalent shrub fertilizer.

You'll need these:

- Shovel
- Pruning Shear
- Lime or Soil Acidifier
- Soaker Hose
- Fertilizer 5-10-5
- Mulch



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Hydrangeas

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You'll love hydrangeas because they come in a variety of shapes and colors, have attractive foliage and are useful in a wide range of garden sites.



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Types of Hydrangeas

Big Leaf Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla

These are perhaps the most commonly-grown Hydrangea in the home garden. They come in the largest range of flowers and colors. This group encompasses **lacecaps** and the universally recognized **mopheads** and is hardy in zones 6-9 (on L.I. we are in zone 7).

Mopheads

‘Endless Summer,’ recently introduced, is the perhaps the greatest development in Hydrangeas in decades. This variety blooms on this year’s growth as well as on previous year’s growth. However, what makes this plant so remarkable is that, when spent flowers are removed (deadheaded), it repeat-blooms. Colors range from blue to pink. It grows 4-5 feet high and wide.



‘All Summer Beauty’ is another repeat bloomer; flowers appear on new growth as well as previous seasons, so you will not lose an entire season’s flowers from winter damage. This compact 3 x 4 foot plant has blue flowers.

‘Nikko Blue’ is a tried-and-true favorite. Very vigorous, it forms large blue flowers in acidic pH soils and produces pink flowers in alkaline pH soils. It grows, on average, 4-6 feet high and wide, occasionally larger.

‘Sister Theresa’ features pure white flowers that eventually change to pink. It grows best in partial shade. Combine it with ‘Glowing Embers’ (red) or one of the blue varieties. It’s an excellent choice for container planting. It grows 3-4 feet high and wide.

‘Glowing Embers’ is characterized by large heads colored from deep pink to dark red and is resistant to “bluing.” It has a compact habit (3 to 4 feet) and dark green foliage.

‘Pia’ grows in dwarf form (height just 1 ½ feet) with small heads of bright pink to deep red flowers, each with a white center.



‘Blushing Bride’ is a repeat bloomer like ‘Endless Summer’ with blooms appearing a bit earlier, June through frost. This 3 x 4 foot plant produces 4–8 inch wide white flowers that are colored blush to light pink or blue depending on soil acidity.

Lacecaps

Pink Lacecap has a delicate pink flower surrounded by larger pink flowers with large green leaves. It grows 4-6 feet high and wide.

Variegated Lacecap has large green leaves with creamy white edges. The flowers are pink to light blue depending on soil acidity. This fast-growing plant prefers partial to full sun and grows 4-6 feet high and wide.

Pruning Big Leaf Hydrangeas

Big Leaf Hydrangeas can be pruned in either late summer or early spring. Late summer is more desirable since flowers develop from the end buds of upright or lateral shoots produced during the late summer and fall of the previous season. Prune as soon as flowers have faded and strong shoots are developing from the lower parts of the stems and crown. Remove some of the weaker shoots at the base that are both old and new. Always try to keep several stems of old productive wood, with a sufficient number of stout new stems that will flower the following season.

Try to limit spring pruning to only the removal of winter damage on the upper portions of stems to conserve flower buds and prune only if absolutely needed. Pruning in early spring to reduce the overall size and for reshaping, although acceptable and commonly practiced, will result in sacrificing most of the blooms for that growing season (except for repeat bloomers like ‘Endless Summer’ and ‘Blushing Bride’, which will put forth good blooms later that same season).

Smooth Hydrangea

Hydrangea arborescens

This is a very hardy deciduous shrub with an open, spreading growth habit. This Hydrangea is native the US, likes shade and is hardy in zones 4-9 (on LI we are in zone 7).

‘Annabelle’ is a low growing (4-6 ft.) shrub with a rounded shape, dark green leaves and huge heads (10 inches across) of creamy white flowers that appear in June and may last all the way through September. As the blooms mature, they turn green, then a tawny brown and are excellent for cutting, fresh or dried.

Pruning Smooth Hydrangeas

Prune these Hydrangeas to within 6 inches of the ground line each winter or early spring; they flower abundantly on new growth.

Oakleaf Hydrangea

Hydrangea quercifolia

This is well named. Its leaves bear a striking resemblance to oak leaves. It is native to the U.S.

Oakleaf Hydrangeas have deep green leaves in the summer that turn to shades of deep red, orange and purple before falling in late autumn to reveal exfoliating cinnamon bark. The Oakleaf Hydrangea is worth growing for its foliage alone, but it also offers large (6-12 inch), handsome, pyramid-shaped creamy white flowers in midsummer, which turn to tones of pink or purple with age. Grows 4-6 feet high and wide. Hardy to zone 5-9. Native to Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi.



Pruning Oakleaf Hydrangeas

Prune in early spring to remove dead or nonproductive wood; cut below any winter-injured wood and remove old wood to the base.