

Spring-Flowering Bulbs

Planting



Fall is the best time to plant spring-flowering bulbs. Existing plantings can be divided at this time as well. Fall and winter is when these bulbs are developing the root system that will support the above-ground growth in the spring.

Choose an area with full sun to part shade. Sandy loam is ideal, but compost can be incorporated to one-foot deep to improve the existing soil. Dig each hole to a depth that will allow the bulb to rest six to eight inches below the soil surface. Space large bulbs four to six inches apart and small bulbs one to two inches apart.

Keep the soil moist and add mulch after the soil freezes to provide insulation and prevent bulbs from being heaved out of the soil. Fertilize with a complete fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or according to a soil test.

Spring Care

Fertilize plants at the same rate as during the fall planting when leaves emerge from the soil in the spring. During the bloom period fertilizer is not beneficial. Bulb roots begin to die back at the time of flowering so fertilizer would be wasted.

Tulip flower stalks should be removed as they wilt to prevent seed development. Though daffodils may look nicer with the spent flowers snipped, it is not required for the health of the plant.

Leaves should be left intact to generate energy, stored in the bulb, for future growth. When the leaves have declined enough they can be separated by gently pulling on them it is safe to remove them. If the leaves are bothersome, other ornamentals can be planted nearby to hide them.



When the leaves have died back, bulbs can be transplanted, if necessary. Dig up each bulb carefully and either replant it right away or dry it for two to three weeks. Place dried bulbs in a mesh bag and store them in a cool, dry location until it is time to plant in the fall.

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