

Bulbs, Tubers, Corms & Bare Roots Guide

*Getting the most
from your bulbs, corms
tubers and bare roots*



Quick Tips

- Open packaging immediately on receipt and stand upright where appropriate.
- If bare roots seem dry, place them in a tray of water for half an hour (excludes bulbs and corms).
- When growing in containers, don't fill to the brim with compost. Leave up to 2.5cm (1in) of pot on show to allow for watering – halve this for small pots and cell trays.
- If growing on the windowsill, turn plants regularly to prevent them stretching towards the light.
- Pots should always have drainage holes, but place on saucers/trays to prevent surface staining. It also helps retain extra water during summer heat.
- Always water prior to planting or potting on.
- Prepare soils ahead of planting. For the best establishment, work incredicompost® and incredibloom® fertiliser into the growing area. These will also give you the best results in containers displays too. Alternatively opt for regular liquid feeds through the season, starting at 6 weeks after planting.
- Avoid planting when soils are too wet or frozen.

BULBS

Preparation: Bulbs are best grown in well-drained soil in a sunny position. Sandy soils offer the best success, you may need to add organic matter to the soil before planting to improve the nutrient levels. Clay soils may require some grit to improve drainage.

Spacing & planting depth: A general rule is to space them by about five times their own width (larger specimens should be planted to three times their own width). Plant bulbs two or three times the depth of the bulb. Always plant bulbs and corms with the pointed growing tip facing upwards. If it isn't clear which is the top then look out for hair-like roots and take these as the bottom of the bulb/corm. Lilies should be placed 8in (20cm) deep allowing roots to develop on the underground stem.

Planting: Place coarse grit and/or sand in the base of the planting holes to improve drainage. Firm down the bulb into the hole to avoid any air pockets. Refill the hole and firm down. Water well to settle. Autumn planted spring bulbs should need no further watering unless winter is particularly dry. Summer flowering bulbs planted in spring will require watering but only lightly, as the soil should never become waterlogged. Bulbs grown in containers may rot if the compost becomes sodden through heavy watering. Water well after planting, but then only water container bulbs when the compost is dry.

Maintenance & Aftercare: Once bulbs produce shoots, increase watering to boost development. You can also to give a weak liquid feed every 3-4 weeks. Remove spent flower heads to improve vigour and prevent wasted energy on seed production. After flowering allow foliage to die back completely before removing so that the bulbs perform well the following year.

Bulbs supplied 'in the green': Bulbs such as snowdrops and bluebells establish better when planted 'in the green', after the bulbs have flowered. On arrival make sure that the roots are damp. If they seem dry, moisten and allow to stand for an hour before planting. If unable to plant immediately, stand in a cool, well lit place out of direct sun and don't allow the roots to dry out. When planting do not remove any foliage attached to the bulbs, as this will die away naturally during the summer. Set in prepared soil or containers to the soil mark on the bulb stems. Water well to settle.

BARE ROOT PERENNIALS, TREES, SHRUBS, ROSES AND HEDGING

These plants are lifted from the nursery field when dormant, and sent to you in late autumn or spring for planting. They often look dead on arrival, but they are just resting in the dormant period and will establish quickly for a strong start in the garden come spring. Set out in prepared soil in holes wide enough and deep enough to lay out the roots. Tread down the planting soil to knock out air pockets. Water well to settle. Apply a mulch to protect roots from cold temperatures. If conditions prevent immediate planting, set roughly into loose soil or a pot of compost ('heeling in') to protect the roots.

Perennials: The growth points of most bare root perennials should be set about an inch below the soil surface. New growth will appear in spring.

Trees, shrubs, roses and hedging: Set these at the same level as they were in the nursery field – you should see a soil line at the base of the stem. Stake trees, taller shrubs and roses to prevent root disturbance.

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