COLORBLENDS®

WHOLESALE FLOWERBULBS

Planting & Care Instructions

Upon Arrival

- **Open all boxes and crates** and remove the bags of bulbs so air can get to them. Check the bags against the packing list and call immediately with any issues.
- **Plant as soon as possible.** Unless you specified a particular delivery week, your bulbs have been shipped at the appropriate time for planting in your area. Get them in the ground as soon as you can.
- **If you can't plant right away,** the bulbs will keep for a week or two in a dry, cool place with good air circulation. Temperatures between 50° and 60°F are ideal, but your bulbs should be fine from 35° to 75°F. Keep them from freezing.

Important: Bulbs must be planted this fall

Choosing a Site

There are two key considerations when choosing a site for bulbs.

1: **Sunlight.** Most bulbs need ample sunshine to bloom well next spring and to store up the energy required to flower in future springs. Some bulbs — including crocuses and scillas — can be planted beneath deciduous trees; these bulbs are able to satisfy most of their light needs before the trees leaf out. (Specific requirements are provided in this pamphlet for each kind of bulb we offer.)

2: **Drainage.** All bulbs, with the exception of leucojum and camassia, need good drainage; never plant bulbs where water collects. The drainage of heavy clay soils can be improved by digging in organic matter such as compost.

Planting

There are two principal methods of planting bulbs.

1: **Planting a bed.** Excavate the area to be planted and loosen the soil in the bottom. Set the bulbs in the bed. Replace the soil (gently at first, to avoid knocking the bulbs out of position). If the soil is dry, water thoroughly.

2: **Planting bulbs individually.** Dig a hole with a trowel, auger, or bulb planter. Drop the bulb (or bulbs — small bulbs such as those of eranthis and anemones can be planted in threes, fours, or more) into the hole. Replace the soil. If the soil is dry, water thoroughly after planting.

Note: For tulips and most small bulbs, don't worry about which end is up. The bulbs know to send shoots up and roots down. Larger bulbs, such as those of daffodils, hyacinths, and big alliums, should be oriented with their points up.

Watering

Bulbs need consistent moisture from fall, when they make new roots, until they finish flowering in spring. If the soil is dry at planting time, water thoroughly after planting. Thereafter water only if rainfall is scarce. Stop watering after the bulbs bloom. Supplemental irrigation after bloom — especially in the Deep South — may cause bulbs to rot.

Fertilizing

The bulbs we ship already have next year's flowers set inside them, so there's no need to fertilize at planting time. To grow and flower well in future springs, bulbs need access to nutrients in the soil. Most soils contain these nutrients in sufficient abundance. If you find that your bulbs (or other garden plants) are not growing well, we suggest that you have your soil tested to identify deficiencies and that you correct those deficiencies with an organic fertilizer, which will release nutrients slowly. You can generally do without fertilizer entirely if you mulch your bulbs with 2–3 inches of an organic material such as compost, shredded bark, aged wood chips, pine straw, or shredded leaves, and freshen it as needed.

Note: If you use mulch, you can reduce the planting depth for your bulbs. The denser the mulch, the greater the reduction, but as a rule of thumb, 2 inches of mulch is equivalent to 1 inch of soil.

Caring for Your Bulbs After They Bloom

After your bulbs bloom, you may remove the spent flowers or seed heads if they are unsightly. In the case of tulips, removing the seed heads may also help to encourage the bulbs to flower again the following year. Do *not* cut the leaves. You must allow the foliage to die back naturally (spring-flowering bulbs go dormant in summer, reappearing the following spring). If you cut, braid, or tie up the foliage before it yellows and withers, you prevent the bulbs from storing up the energy they will need to grow and bloom again the following year. Of course, if you intend to lift and discard bulbs after they bloom and plant new bulbs in the fall, there's no need to wait for the foliage to yellow.

Bulb growth cycle

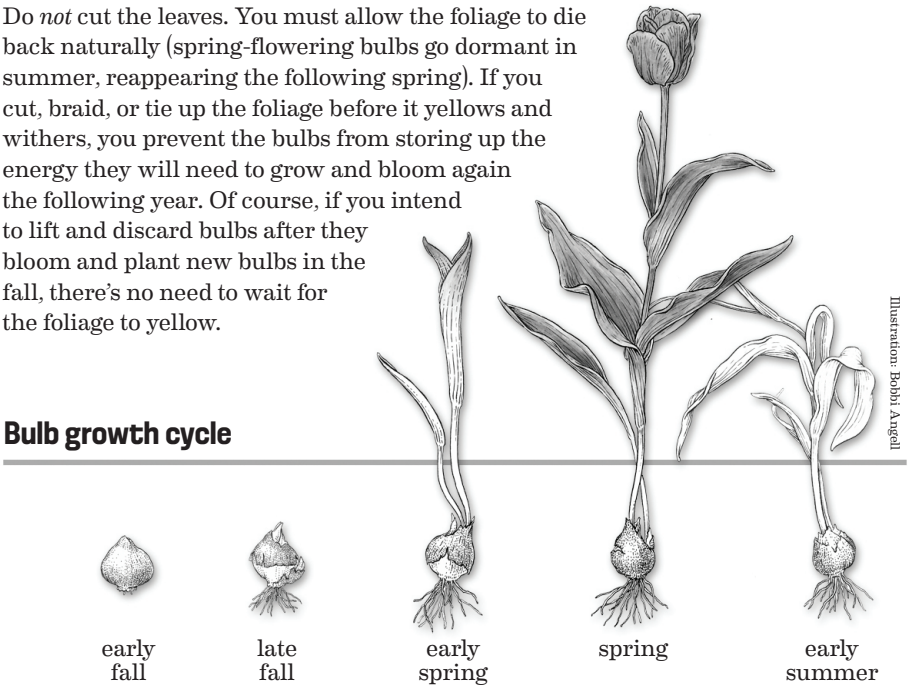


Illustration: Bobbi Angell

Thinking about planting in pots?

Please think twice, especially if you live in a cold climate. Most spring-flowering bulbs are incredibly cold hardy when planted in the ground, but in a pot, with the cold coming in from all sides, they can be killed if temperatures remain below freezing for an extended period. In warm climates, heat, not cold, is the concern. If bulbs don't get sufficient cold, they will fail to perform as expected. So where is it safe to plant in containers? Depends on where you are, depends on the severity of winter, which no one knows in advance. Until you get some experience, please go slow. Colorblends guarantees its bulbs the first spring after planting, if planted in the ground, but bulbs in pots are at your own risk. For more on this subject, scan the QR code.

Alliums	Sun: ☼
Spacing: see bag label	Planting depth: see bag label

Plant in full sun and well-drained soil. Sandy soil is ideal. Allium leaves begin to yellow before the flowers open. You can disguise the foliage by planting large alliums among bushy perennials or shrubs, and small alliums among low-growing perennials. The flower heads of large alliums remain attractive for a time after the color fades. They can be left in the garden or cut and dried for use in indoor arrangements. Some alliums (Siculum and Moly, for example) may self-sow.

Anemone (Windflower)	Sun: ◐
Spacing: 2″ apart	Planting depth: 2″

Prefers dappled shade in most climates; will tolerate full sun in northern regions. Grows best in soil that has been loosened before planting. It's hard to tell top from bottom on anemone tubers, but it doesn't matter which end is up: The tubers know to send shoots up and roots down.

Camassia	Sun: ☼
Spacing: 4″ apart	Planting depth: 6″

Plant in full sun or light shade and evenly moist soil. Camassias are among the few bulbs that thrive in damp, or even wet, soil. Foliage is slow to die back in summer; do not cut before it has completely yellowed.

Chionodoxa (Glory of the Snow)	Sun: ☼ ◐
Spacing: 2″ apart	Planting depth: 3″

Full sun or partial shade. Well-drained soil that is not too dry. If left undisturbed, the bulbs may seed themselves about, eventually forming a lavender-blue carpet in spring. Chionodoxa can be naturalized in a lawn if you're willing to hold off on mowing until the seed is dispersed and the foliage has yellowed.

Crocuses	Sun:
Spacing: see bag label	Planting depth: 3″

Plant in full sun or partial shade and well-drained soil. For earliest bloom, put crocuses in a sunny, protected location — against the south-facing foundation of a house, for example. Can be planted in a lawn if you're willing to hold off on mowing until the foliage has yellowed.

Daffodils (see Narcissus, page 6)

Eranthis (Winter Wolf's Bane, Winter Aconite)	Sun:
Spacing: 2″ apart	Planting depth: 2″

Best in dappled sunlight and well-drained soil that does not dry out entirely in summer. It's hard to tell top from bottom on eranthis tubers, but it doesn't matter which end is up: The tubers know to send shoots up and roots down. To speed planting, you can put several tubers in a single planting hole. If left undisturbed, eranthis may seed itself about, eventually forming a yellow carpet in early spring.

Fritillaria imperialis (Crown Imperial)	Sun:
Spacing: 8″ apart	Planting depth: 6″

Full sun or light shade. Fertile, deeply dug, evenly moist soil. Amend sandy soil with plenty of compost or leaf mold. These fritillarias are heavy feeders that benefit from a mulch of composted manure or leaf mold in the fall or a dusting of bulb fertilizer in early spring.

Fritillaria meleagris (Snake's Head)	Sun:
Spacing: 3″ apart	Planting depth: 4″

Best in partial shade (will tolerate full sun in northern regions) and evenly moist soil. This fritillaria can be planted in rough grassy areas, where it looks very natural. Just be sure you wait to mow until the foliage has yellowed.

Galanthus (Snowdrops)	Sun:
Spacing: 3″ apart	Planting depth: 3″

Plant in partial shade (will tolerate full sun in northern regions) and loose, rich, evenly moist soil. Established bulbs may produce leaves in late fall or early winter but generally wait to flower until the first hint of warmth in early spring. If you want to relocate Snowdrops or divide a clump, the best time to do it is just after bloom, while the leaves are still green.

Note: Snowdrops suffer from prolonged periods of dry storage; we urge you to get them into the ground as soon as you receive them.

Hyacinthoides (Spanish Bluebells)	Sun:
Spacing: 3″ apart	Planting depth: 4″

Plant in full sun or shade (as long as it's not too dense) and in soil that does not dry out completely in summer. In the wild, Spanish Bluebells grow on the woodland floor, forming colonies in the high shade of deciduous trees. The same effect can be had in the landscape if the seeds are allowed to ripen after the flowers fade.

Hyacinths	Sun:
Spacing: 5″ apart	Planting depth: 5″

Hyacinths need at least a half day of sun to flower well and store up enough energy for the following spring's display. They grow in any well-drained soil. The flower heads are at their largest and fullest the first spring after planting; in subsequent years the flower heads tend to be more loose and informal.

Note: Hyacinth bulbs can irritate your skin. Wear gloves when handling and plan on showering soon after planting.

Iris	Sun:
Spacing: 3″ apart	Planting depth: 3″

Irises require well-drained soil and full sun, and like to be dry in summer. The bulbs perform best if planted with points up. After bloom, the narrow, grasslike foliage elongates, eventually standing 12–14 inches tall. It collapses and disappears by early summer.

Leucojum (Snowflake)	Sun:
Spacing: see package label	Planting depth: see package label

Full sun or partial shade and soil that does not dry out entirely in summer. In the wild, snowflakes are found in damp meadows and on river banks, so they are a good choice for a spot where the soil is less than perfectly drained. Bulbs are very slow to go dormant in summer; wait to cut back until the leaves have yellowed.

Save your labels!

We suggest you save a bag label for each variety you plant. You can make notes in pen or pencil on the back. When the bulbs start coming up in spring, you'll have a record of what you planted and where.



Muscari (Grape Hyacinths)	Sun:
Spacing: 2″ apart	Planting depth: 3″

These bulbs thrive in full sun or partial shade and any well-drained soil. *Muscari armeniacum* bulbs planted in a prior year often produce tufts of grasslike foliage in late summer or early fall, which has the benefit of reminding you where they are when you are planting additional bulbs. They will bloom on schedule the following spring.

Note: Do not be concerned if you see blue mold on your muscari bulbs. Go ahead and plant them. The mold will not affect their performance.

Narcissus (Daffodils, Jonquils)	Sun:
Spacing: see bag label	Planting depth: see bag label

To get the most from daffodils, follow these 3 basic rules:

1: **Plant them where they will get at least 6 hours of direct sunlight,** even after they have finished flowering and the trees have leafed out. Daffodils need lots of sun after they bloom to produce next year's flowers.

2: **Plant them in soil that drains well.** Avoid areas where water stands after a rain storm.

3: **After daffodils flower, wait at least 8 weeks — until the leaves turn completely yellow — before cutting them.** Never tie or braid daffodil foliage. This year's leaves = next year's flowers. Be patient!

If you want to naturalize daffodils (i.e., plant them so that they look as though they have sprung up on their own), we suggest that you set them out in drifts (not in blocks or lines) and that you space the bulbs farther apart than recommended on the bag label (to allow room for the bulbs to increase their number). If you want to naturalize daffodils in a grassy area, you must wait to mow until their foliage has turned yellow, which means allowing the grass to grow very tall.

Puschkinia (Striped Squill)	Sun:
Spacing: 2″ apart	Planting depth: 3″

Undemanding bulbs that are happy either in full sun or partial shade. All they require is well-drained soil. If left undisturbed, they are capable of self-sowing.

Scilla (Blue Squill, White Squill)	Sun:
Spacing: see bag label	Planting depth: 3″

Full sun or partial shade. Well-drained soil. Blue squill can self-sow with abandon: If left undisturbed, a handful of bulbs may eventually become a brilliant blue carpet in spring. Can be naturalized in a lawn if you're willing to hold off on mowing until the seed capsules open and the foliage has yellowed.

Tulips	Sun: ☼
Spacing: see bag label	Planting depth: see bag label

Tulips perform best in full sun but will tolerate a bit of shade (some afternoon shade will prolong flower life, especially in the South). They require well-drained soil. Treat tulips as annuals if you want a perfect display: After they flower, lift and discard the bulbs and replant fresh ones in the fall. In a less formal situation, you can leave the bulbs in place. The flowers will be uneven in size and height and generally much fewer in number, but that can have its own charm.

To encourage tulips to bloom again in future years we recommend that you:

1: **Remove the spent flowers** as soon as the bulbs finish blooming. Snapping off the top 3 inches of the flower stem prevents seed formation and focuses energy instead on bulb growth.

2: **Allow the foliage to wither completely** before you remove it.

3: **Avoid summer irrigation.** Tulips prefer to be dry during their dormancy.

Indoor Bulbs

Amaryllises

Plant each bulb in a 7- or 8-inch pot (bulbs may also be clustered in a larger pot). A ceramic or clay pot is a good choice because it helps to counterbalance the weight of the flowers. Use any commercial potting mix (available at garden centers and home stores). Plant so that the top one-third to one-half of the bulb is above the level of the potting mix. Water thoroughly after planting and set the pot in a sunny window (south- or west-facing is best). Room temperature (60°–75°F) is ideal — the warmer the room the faster the bulb will grow.

Water sparingly until growth is clearly under way, then water thoroughly whenever the surface of the potting mix is dry to the touch. Turn the pot daily to promote balanced growth (the stems will lean toward the window).

In the average home, flowers will appear 8–12 weeks after planting. Although it defies common sense, the earlier you plant an amaryllis bulb, the longer it takes to flower. Once flowering begins, bloom can be prolonged by moving the bulb to a cool spot at night.

Because they often flower before they have made new roots and their bulbs shrink as they produce stems and foliage, amaryllises are susceptible to toppling when they are in their prime. To avert a messy end, support leaning stems with stakes and twine.

It is possible to get amaryllises to bloom again the following winter. After the flowers on each stem fade, cut the stem off 3–4 inches above the top of the bulb. Do not cut the leaves. Continue to water as needed and begin fertilizing monthly with a water-soluble houseplant fertilizer (mixed as directed). After the danger of frost has passed in spring, set the pot outdoors in a sheltered location. Over the course of a week or so, gradually increase the bulb's exposure to sunlight and wind.

The bulb should then be moved to a larger pot or planted (with the top of the bulb exposed) in the ground. The bulb needs lots of sun (ideally more than six

hours a day in northern regions) to store up the energy it needs to flower. Continue to water and fertilize the bulb through summer. In late September or early October, bring the pot indoors (or lift the bulb from the soil) and place it in a cool, dry location such as a basement or garage for 6–8 weeks. Mark your calendar or set a reminder in your phone to alert you when time is up. Then cut away old leaves, pot or repot the bulb (trimming the roots, if necessary, to fit the pot), and put it in a sunny window.

Note: Oversummered bulbs typically flower later than newly purchased bulbs.

Paperwhites

Paperwhites can be planted in a commercial potting mix in a conventional pot. They can also be planted in pebbles in a bowl or similar container that does not have a drainage hole in the bottom. The container should be at least 3 inches deep. Fill the pot or container with potting mix or pebbles to within 2 inches of the rim. Set the bulbs very close together (it's OK if they touch). Cover with additional potting mix or pebbles, leaving just the necks exposed. Water thoroughly. If you are planting in pebbles, water with care. The water level should be just below the bottoms of the bulbs (a clear container allows you to see the water level). If the bulbs sit in water, they may rot.

Place the container in a cool (50°F is ideal) place such as a closet or basement. Cool temperatures stimulate root growth. If you don't have a cool location, set the container on the floor away from radiators or heat vents. Check the bulbs frequently and water as necessary. Do not let the bulbs dry out.

When the bulbs are firmly rooted and growth begins to show (about 2 weeks after potting), move the container to a sunny window. Continue to water as needed. Paperwhites in active growth can be very thirsty; they may need to be watered every 3–4 days. Rotate the container daily to promote balanced growth (the leaves and stems will lean toward the light). If the plants grow tall and look as though they may topple, support them with twine and stakes. Florist's wire can also be used.

Paperwhites generally bloom 5–6 weeks after planting. You can stagger plantings to keep the color and fragrance coming. Store unplanted bulbs in a cool (but not freezing) location.

Paperwhites can't survive winter outdoors in most of the United States, and they won't flower again if kept indoors. Unless you live in a mild-winter climate, we suggest that you discard the bulbs after they bloom.