

Happy Healthy Hydrangeas



Environmental Requirements With the exception of Oak Leaf and Panicle Hydrangea, which can tolerate full sun, all hydrangeas prefer morning sun and afternoon shade. Each type of hydrangea thrives in acidic soil, not just the blue varieties. Amending the soil with Grandma's *Acidic Planting Mix* and fertilizing in the fall with *Holly-tone* will help keep your Hydrangea happy and healthy. *Holly-tone* applications in the Spring and Fall will not be enough to keep your hydrangea blue. Additional applications three times throughout the summer or an application of *Aluminum Sulfate* at the start of summer will help to keep the blue color. All hydrangeas prefer moist, well-drained soil and benefit from regular watering

Hydrangea macrophylla (big-leaf hydrangea) These varieties include *Hortensias* (mophead) blooms or *Rays* (lacecap) blooms. You should prune as soon as blooms fade, no later or you will remove next year's blooms. Old flowers could be left on for winter interest, otherwise prune back to the large flower buds, leaving them untouched. Old leggy stems should be cut back within 20" from the ground. This variety actually requires very little pruning, but may require some winter protection like insulation with mulch or leaves. The exceptions are 'Endless Summer', 'Lady in Red', and some other newer varieties, which bloom on new and old wood and are much more winter hardy.

Hydrangea paniculata (panicle hydrangea) This type has large, panicle blooms that can measure 8 inches or longer. Varieties include: 'Limelight', 'Pinky Winky', 'Little Lamb', and 'Quickfire'. These Hydrangeas bloom on growth produced during the same season that they flower. Pruning is usually done in late summer and fall. You should prune any spent flowers to encourage optimal blooming. Pruning 5 to 7 inches down from the top of the Hydrangea can actually promote larger blooms in late summer. However, if you would like the plant to grow to its full potential size do not prune. The blooms are great as cut flowers and last about 2 weeks in a vase.

Hydrangea anomalo petiolaris (climbing hydrangea) Attractive, lacecap blooms form during the summer on this beautiful climber. Prune just before active growth season (early spring) by cutting back overly vigorous stems, or stems growing too far out from their support. Pruning will stimulate new, flowering shoots.



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