

CARE GUIDE:

Growing Pansies



Pansies are charming and beautiful bedding plants providing a long season of color from fall through spring in the Piedmont of NC. They're important to local landscapes as one of the only plants that bloom through fall, winter, and into early summer. Many colors and color combinations are available giving you the option to change things up each year to enjoy a new color palette. *The key is to plant early enough in fall to*

get them established before winter. Regular fertilizer will keep flower production going, and, if you have time, removing old flowers directs energy to producing new flowers instead of seed production. In winter, expect them to "huddle" through the coldest times and perk up during warmer spells. As soon as the heat arrives, pansy season is over, and it's time to plant warm-season annuals for summer.

—Light—



Full sun to part sun with a minimum of 6 hours of direct sunlight for best performance.

—Water—



Several times a week the first few weeks in the ground while temps are warm. Taper to 1-2 times a week as plants get established and temperatures moderate. Once established, water once each rainless week until it gets cold or once it warms up in spring.

—Soil—



Well-drained soil is best as plants will struggle in poorly-drained areas. Amend clay soils and/or plant in raised beds.

PLANTING

Choose a sunny location in your landscape that has good soil drainage. The more shade your plants are in the less compact the plants will be and fewer blooms will be produced. For container planting, use a commercial potting mix. In the ground, a rich organic soil is ideal. If the soil needs improving, composted cow manure and pine bark soil conditioner are excellent amendments. When planting, water plants a few hours before removing them from the pack or pot. Dig planting holes slightly larger than the rootball, Pansies should be planted about the same depth as they are growing when purchased. Backfill with amended soil. We recommend incorporating a general purpose fertilizer for flowering plants or one formulated for pansies such as Ferti-lome™ Premium Bedding Plant Food into the soil at the time of planting. Water thoroughly after planting.

FERTILIZING

After incorporating fertilizer into the soil at the time of planting, many gardeners will later come back and topdress the bed with blood meal (12-0-0) at a rate of 1 lb. per 25 pansy plants. Others will supplement with a

liquid application of Bloom Booster Flower Food™ fertilizer or a similar fertilizer labeled to promote blooming. Ferti-lome Premium Bedding Plant Food is a granular fertilizer that is also excellent for follow-up fertilizing and will help keep pansies at peak production.

WATERING

Don't wait for newly planted pansies to show signs of wilt before watering. A little extra attention in the first few weeks after planting will ensure healthy plants. In the landscape, use water wisely by watering slowly and deeply. Plants in containers will need water more frequently because potting soil dries out more quickly.

MULCHING

Adding a layer of mulch will help conserve water in the bed and cut down on weeds. We have found pine bark or pine straw mulch to work best.



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