

Clematis

Clematis are among the most popular of climbing vines. All varieties are vigorous in growth and produce displays of masses of flowers. They attach themselves by means of twining leaf stalks and are suitable for growing up walls, trellises and covering old tree stumps.

PLANTING

The main points to consider when growing clematis are:

LOCATION

If you have a sunny or part-sunny location, any variety of clematis will do well. If you have a shady location, a spring-blooming variety should be chosen for better blooming.

SUPPORT

Plant the vine next to a trellis, tree trunk or open framework for stems to grow on. Its roots should be cool while top is in full sun. This can be achieved by planting it behind other shrubs or by planting bedding plants in front of your clematis.

SOIL

Give it rich, loose, fast draining soil. Where soils are strongly acid, add lime. Where soils are either neutral or alkaline add bone meal.

DEPTH

When planting your clematis, the crown (base of the plant) should be planted 15cm below ground level. This can be done as long as the stem is ripe (woody, brown, and hard). If the plant is young and the wood is not ripe enough, the hole should still be dug deep enough to bury the crown by 15cm. As the wood hardens through the summer months, the hole can be filled in.

FEEDING

In February or early March, well-rotted manure or well-rotted compost makes an ideal feeding mulch. The mulch should be placed on the soil to a depth of 8cm and diameter of 50cm, DO NOT place any of the manure or compost on the main stem or leaves of the plant as this will cause damage.

Liquid feed can also be applied if the above is not done. Make sure the liquid feed chosen is a well-balanced general feed. This can be applied during watering from April until the end of July. It is however, important that feeding should be stopped before flowering commences. If feeding were to continue during the build-up to full flowering and during flowering, then, sadly, the flowers would mature much faster, thus reducing the flowering period of the plant.

PRUNING

Towards the end of the first winter after planting, all clematis should be pruned back to three sets of leaves. This gives you a nice bushy plant in the future.

Pruning the 3 types of clematis Since there are different types of clematis with different pruning requirements, we have simplified things by using the three main clematis categories. If you are not sure which group your clematis falls into, please ask one of our knowledgeable nursery staff members.

EARLY BLOOMERS - GROUP A

These clematis flower on old wood from the previous season's growth and thus should not be pruned. These are varieties that bloom in the spring. If you would like to prune it to shape, do it after it blooms. Pruning later than June or very severe pruning will result in fewer blooms the following spring.



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MID-SEASON BLOOMERS GROUP B

Flowers bloom on wood from the previous season as well as wood from the current season's growth. Pruning on these varieties is optional. However, if they are frozen back to the ground, they will bloom later in the season than they would have, had they not been pruned. They will still perform very well. This is true for all clematis in this section with the exception of double flowering varieties (those with an indefinite number of petals that give it an unusually full look). These will only have double flowers on hardened wood (normally the previous season's growth), and thus will not perform well if pruned hard. It should also be noted that the doubles in general are not as vigorous or as free-flowering as the singles.

LATE-SEASON BLOOMERS - GROUP C These clematis bloom on wood grown and hardened during the current season. They should be pruned hard during dormancy (leave 3 pairs of leaves on each stem). If they are not pruned, it will still bloom. However, blooms will only appear above last season's growth because these varieties only bloom on the current season's growth. An option here is to prune half the plant back. This will give you a taller plant with blooms down low as well.

GARDENWORKS™ FAVOURITES

The following Clematis varieties come highly recommended by our nursery staff members.

BLUE RAVINE

A U.B.C. Botanical Garden introduction. The 20-25cm (8-10") flowers are soft-violet with slightly darker veins. Bloom time is May June and September. Mature height is approx. 2-2.5metres (6-9 feet). Likes full or partial sun. Great for containers and great for cutting.

JACKMANII

Probably the most popular clematis of all time. It is easy to grow and displays gorgeous deep purple 10-14cm (4-6") flowers. Bloom time is from mid-June through to August. Mature height is approx. 3.5-6 metres (12-20 feet). Likes full-sun, part-sun or even shade.

NELLY MOSER

For over 100 years 'Nelly Moser' has been most peoples favourite clematis. The 18-23cm (7-9") size blossoms are pastel mauve-pink with a carmine bar. The mature height is approx. 2.5 - 3.5 metres (8-12 feet). Bloom time is May, June and September. Likes partial sun to shade. Great for containers and for cutting.

THE PRESIDENT

One of the most reliable choices, remaining popular for over 100 years! The beautiful purple-blue blooms are approx. 15-20cm (6-8") big, and don't fade in the sun. A great ground cover or climber for arbors, fences or onto tall shrubs. Approx. plant size is 2-3 metres (6-10 feet). Bloom time is May-September. Likes full sun.

VILLE DE LYON

A favourite since the turn of the century. The flowers have a carmine edge that fades into a lighter inner area and large yellow stamens. These unique blooms are 10-15cm (4-6") if pruned hard or 12-18cm (5-7") if pruned lightly. Bloom time is June through September. Aprox. plant size is 2.5-3.5 metres (8-12 feet). Likes full or part sun. Great in containers and good for cutting.