

# COLORBLENDS®

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## **PLANTING & CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

**Bulbs must be planted this Fall**

### **Upon Arrival**

Open all boxes and remove the bags of bulbs so air can get to them. Unless you specified otherwise, your bulbs have been shipped at the right time for planting in your area, and we urge you to plant them as soon as possible. If you can't plant right away, store the bulbs in a dry, dark, cool place with good air circulation. Temperatures between 50° and 60°F are ideal, but your bulbs should be fine within a range of 35°–75°F. All of the bulbs (except amaryllis and paperwhites) **MUST** be planted in fall to bloom next spring.

### **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. Many bulbs – including crocuses and bluebells – can be planted beneath deciduous trees; these bulbs are able to satisfy most of their light needs before the trees leaf out. (Specific light requirements are provided in this pamphlet for each kind of bulb we offer.)

**2: Drainage.** All bulbs need good drainage; never plant bulbs where water collects. The drainage of heavy clay soils may be improved by digging in organic matter such as compost or composted manure.

### **Planting**

There are two principal ways 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, following the spacing recommendations provided in this pamphlet. Replace the soil. 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 ranunculus or anemones can be planted in threes or fours) into the hole. Replace the soil. If the soil is dry, water thoroughly after planting.

**NOTE:** Don't worry too much about which end is up on a bulb. Bulbs know to send shoots up and roots down. They will grow and bloom even if you plant them upside down.

## Watering

Bulbs need ample 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.

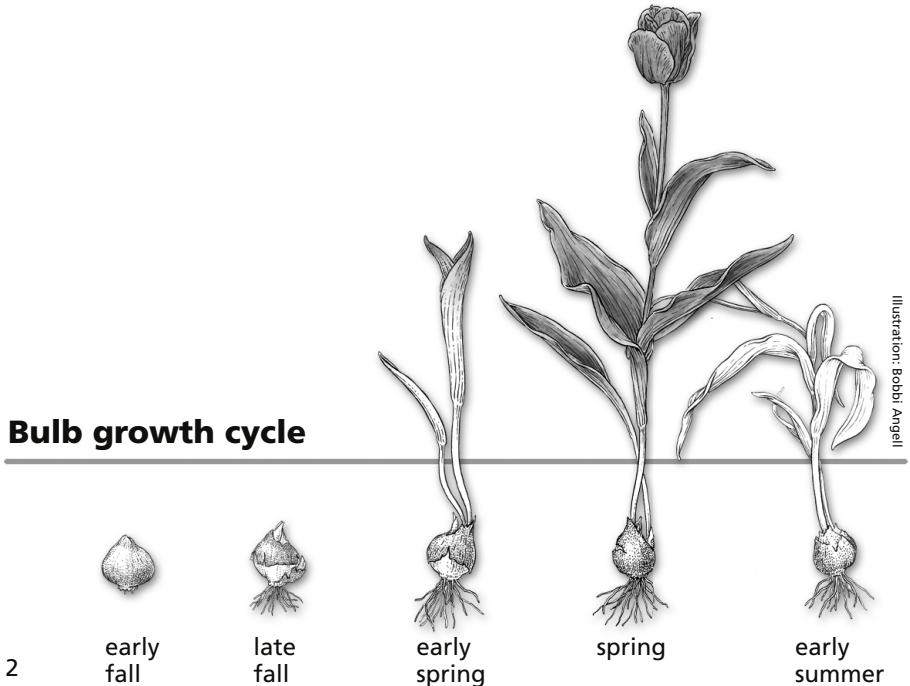
## Fertilizing


The bulbs we ship already have next year's flowers set inside them, so there's no need to fertilize at planting time. If you intend for your bulbs to be long-term players in your landscape, you may want to fertilize them in early spring, when the shoots begin to push through the soil. We suggest that you have your soil tested first to identify any nutrient deficiencies and that you correct those deficiencies with an organic fertilizer, which will release nutrients slowly. Most bulbs are not heavy feeders. You can generally do without fertilizer entirely if you mulch your bulbs annually with 2–3" of an organic material such as compost, shredded bark (not pine bark) or shredded leaves.

## 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 foliage. 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 next year. Of course, if you intend to lift and discard tulips after they bloom and plant new bulbs in the fall, there's no need to wait for the foliage to yellow.

## Bulb growth cycle




<b>Alliums</b>	Sun: 
Planting depth: see bag label	Spacing: see bag label



Plant in full sun or light shade and well-drained soil. Sandy soil is ideal. Allium foliage may begin to yellow by the time the flowers open. You can disguise the foliage by planting large alliums behind or among perennials or shrubs, and small alliums in a loose ground cover. The flower heads of Globemaster and Christophii remain attractive even after the color drains away. They can be left in the garden or cut and dried for use in indoor arrangements.

<b>Anemone blanda</b> (windflower)	Sun:  
Planting depth: 2"	Spacing: 2" apart



Best in dappled shade in most climates; will tolerate full sun in northern regions. Tubers are deep rooting; they perform 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. To speed planting, you can put several tubers in a single planting hole.

<b>Camassia</b>	Sun: 
Planting depth: 6"	Spacing: 5" apart


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.

<b>Chionodoxa</b> (glory of the snow)	Sun:  
Planting depth: 3"	Spacing: 2" apart


Full sun or partial shade. Well-drained soil that is not too dry. If left undisturbed, the bulbs will seed themselves about, eventually forming a thick 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 begins to yellow.

<b>Crocuses</b>	Sun:  
Planting depth: 3"	Spacing: 3" apart


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 begins to yellow.

<b>Eranthis</b> (winter wolf's bane, winter aconite)	Sun: 
Planting depth: 2"	Spacing: 2" apart


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 will seed itself about, eventually forming a carpet of bright yellow in early spring.

<b>Erythronium</b> (trout lily)	Sun: 
Planting depth: 4"	Spacing: 5" apart


Plant in partial shade and evenly moist, woody soil. To simulate woody soil, dig plenty of compost or leafmold into your soil before planting. Mulch after planting or in spring with compost or shredded leaves to maintain that woody quality.

<b>Fritillaria imperialis</b> (crown imperial) <b>Fritillaria persica</b> (Persian fritillary)	Sun: 
Planting depth: 6"	Spacing: 8" apart



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

<b>Fritillaria meleagris</b> (snake's head)	Sun: 
Planting depth: 4"	Spacing: 3" apart


Best in partial shade (will tolerate full sun in northern regions) and evenly moist soil that doesn't dry out in summer. This fritillaria can be planted in rough grassy areas, where it looks very natural. Just be sure you wait to mow until the bulb foliage begins to yellow.

<b>Galanthus</b> (snowdrops)	Sun: 
Planting depth: 4"	Spacing: 2" apart

Plant in partial shade (will tolerate full sun in northern regions) and loose, rich, evenly moist soil. Snowdrops suffer from prolonged periods of dry storage; we urge you to get them into the ground as soon as you receive them.



<b>Hyacinthoides</b> (Spanish bluebells)		Sun:  
Planting depth: 4"	Spacing: 4" apart	

Adaptable bulbs that grow in full sun or shade (as long as it's not too dense) and in any well-drained soil that does not dry out completely in summer. In the wild, they grow on the woodland floor, often forming dense colonies in the high shade of deciduous trees. The same effect can be had in the landscape if the seeds are allowed to ripen and fall at their parents' feet.



<b>Hyacinths</b>		Sun: 
Planting depth: 5"	Spacing: 5" apart	

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 flowers tend to be more loose and informal.



**Please note:** Hyacinth bulbs can irritate your skin. Wear gloves when handling.

<b>Ipheion</b> (starflower)		Sun:  
Planting depth: 2"	Spacing: 3" apart	

Plant in full sun or partial shade and well-drained soil. It's not unusual for the foliage of bulbs planted in a prior year to re-emerge in fall. The flowers will open on schedule the following spring.


<b>Leucojum</b> (snowflakes)		Sun:  
Planting depth: 6"	Spacing: 5" apart	

Full sun or partial shade and soil that does not dry out entirely in summer. In the wild, bulbs 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.

<b>Muscari</b> (grape hyacinths)	Sun:  
Planting depth: 3"	Spacing: 2" apart

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 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.

**Please 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.



<b>Narcissus</b> (daffodils, jonquils)	Sun: 
Planting depth: large bulbs 6" small bulbs 4"	Spacing: large bulbs 4" apart small bulbs 3" apart

To get the most from daffodils, follow these 4 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: Fertilize very lightly with a low-nitrogen fertilizer,** preferably organic, just as the shoots emerge from the ground in early spring.
- 4: After daffodils flower, wait at least 6 weeks – until the leaves turn yellow – before cutting them.** Never tie or braid daffodil foliage.

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

**Please note:** Daffodil flowers face the prevailing direction of the light they receive. If you plant them in an open location that is viewed from the north, they will look away from you.

<b>Scilla</b> (blue squill)	Sun:  
Planting depth: 3"	Spacing: 2" apart

Full sun or partial shade. Well-drained soil. Blue squill self-sows with abandon: If left undisturbed, a handful of bulbs will eventually become a thick, 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 begins to yellow.

<b>Tulips</b>		Sun: 
Planting depth: large bulbs 5" small bulbs 4"	Spacing: large bulbs 4" apart small bulbs 3" apart	

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 do the following:

- 1: Plant the bulbs deeply**, 8 inches instead of the usual 5. Deep planting may help to prevent the bulbs from splitting into small, non-flowering bulbs.
- 2: Fertilize the bulbs** when the foliage pushes through the soil in early spring. Don't overdo it. A light scattering of a low-nitrogen fertilizer, preferably organic, is enough.
- 3: 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.
- 4: Allow the foliage to wither completely** before you remove it.
- 5: Avoid summer irrigation.** Tulips prefer to be dry during their dormancy.

## Indoor Bulbs

### Amaryllis

Plant each bulb in a 6- or 7-inch pot (bulbs may also be clustered in a larger pot). A terra-cotta pot is a good choice because it helps to counterbalance the weight of the large 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 bright 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 regularly to promote balanced growth (the stems will lean toward the window). In the average home, flowers will appear 8–12 weeks after planting (Rapido may flower in as little as 5 weeks after planting). Bloom can be prolonged by moving the bulb to a cool location at night.

If you want your amaryllis to flower again the following year\*, cut each flower stem off 2 inches above the top of the bulb after the blooms fade. 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 shady location. Over the course of a week or so, gradually increase the bulb's exposure to sunlight. 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.

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\*We guarantee that our amaryllis bulbs will flower abundantly the first year. Bloom in subsequent years is not guaranteed.

The bulb can be left in its pot, moved to a larger pot or planted (at the same level) in the ground. Continue to water and fertilize the bulb through summer. In late summer or fall (some gardeners wait until after the first frost), bring the pot indoors (or lift the bulb from the soil) and place it in a cool (50°F is ideal), dry location such as a basement for 8–10 weeks. About two months before flowering is desired, repot the bulb (if necessary) as directed above and put it in a sunny window.

### **Paperwhites**

Any sort of pot or bowl can be used, as long as it is at least 3 inches deep. The bulbs can be potted in a commercial potting mix (available at garden centers and home stores) or pebbles (if you use pebbles, choose a pot or bowl that does not have a drainage hole in the bottom; a clear container allows you to see the water level). Fill the container with potting mix or pebbles to within 2 inches of the rim. Set the bulbs very closely (it's OK if they touch). Cover the bulbs with additional potting mix or pebbles, leaving just the necks exposed. Water thoroughly. If you use a container that does not have a drainage hole, water with care: The water level should be just below the bottoms of the bulbs. 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 but water very sparingly until shoots emerge from the bulbs.

When the bulbs are firmly rooted and growth begins to show, move the container to a sunny window. Water as needed and rotate the container frequently to promote balanced growth (the 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 are frost tender, and it's difficult to get them to flower well again indoors. We suggest that you discard the bulbs after they bloom.

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**Our Roots... Are Bulbs™**