

INFORMATION

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GROWING & FORCING INDOOR BULBS



INDOOR BULBS A large number of half hardy bulbs can be grown as house plants. Some of these bulbous plants keep their leaves all year round (Clivia, Eucharis, Vallota etc) and so are generally regarded as 'Flowering House Plants' rather than 'Bulbs'. Most indoor bulbs however, such as the popular Hippeastrum, lose their leaves during the dormant period. The routine here is to leave them in the pot when the foliage dies down - the compost is kept almost dry until growth starts again.

FORCING and NON-FORCING Forcing involves keeping the planted up bulb both cold and dark until the roots have developed and spread in the compost, and then moving the container to a well-lit and warmer spot indoors as soon as the shoots are an inch or two high. There is also the straightforward non-forcing approach whereby pots of a wide range of bulbs grown in the garden can be brought indoors when they are in bud or in flower so as to provide their display in the kitchen, living room or hall.

FORCEFUL TIPS

- * Choose solid firm bulbs. Store in a cool dry place prior to planting.
- * Moisten the bulb fibre before use by placing the required amount of bulb fibre in a clean bucket, then adding a little water and mix thoroughly. (*Bulb fibre is a suitable growing medium but it is better to use a peat-based compost if you intend to save the bulbs for garden use after they have flowered.*)
- * Part fill the bulb bowl with bulb fibre and firm gently.
- * When planting, ensure bulbs do not touch each other or the side of the bowl. The tops of the bulbs must be just level with the top of the bowl. Fill with bulb fibre to 1cm below the top of the bowl and firm gently.
- * Place in a dark, cool but frost free area. A temperature of 40 degrees F is ideal.
- * Check bulbs every 7-10 days. Keep moist. Do not over water and avoid getting water on the crown of the bulbs.
- * When the shoots reach approx. 2.5-5cm high, move the container to a room indoors (approx. 50 degrees F). Place in a shady spot at first then after a few days move to a brighter spot 60-65 degrees F.
- * Turn the bowl occasionally so that growth will be even.
- * Once bulbs have finished flowering, plant outside.

BULBS IDEAL FOR FORCING INDOORS

BULB

HYACINTHS

Specially Prepared
Ordinary Bulbs (all varieties).

TULIPS

Brilliant Star (red)
Christmas Marvel (carmine)
Joffre (yellow)

Apricot Beauty (apricot)
Kees Nelis (red, edged yellow)
Mirjoran (red, edged cream)
Merry Widow (red, edged white)
Monte Carlo (yellow)
Paul Richter (red)
Prominence (dark red)
Stockholm (scarlet)
Charles (scarlet, yellow base)

DAFFODILS

Paperwhite var. Galilee (pure white)
Carlton (uniform yellow)
Cragford (white with red cup)
Dutch Master (soft yellow)
Flower Record (white & yellow)
Fortune (yellow & orange)
Golden Harvest (golden yellow)
Ice Follies (white)
Peeping Tom (yellow)
Professor Einstein (white & orange)
Verger (white & deep red)
Yellow Sun (clear yellow)

Amaryllis (various colours)

Crocus (blue)
Crocus (yellow)
Species Crocus
Galanthus nivalis, nivalis flore pleno
Iris danfordiae, histroides major
Iris reticulata hybrids
Muscaria armeniacum, botroides album
Puschkinia libanotica
Scilla siberica, tubergeniana

TIME OF PLANTING

Earliest Flowering Time

Aug 15 - Oct 7
October
November

December 15
January 15
February 15

October 1

December 25

October
November

February
March

Daffodil



October

End January

Galanthus



October

January
End January
Early February
February 15
End January
January 15
End January
Early February
Early February



Crocus

HYACINTHS

Watering should be withheld after indoor Hyacinths have flowered to let the foliage wither and then the bulbs should be removed. Clean and store them for planting in the garden in early autumn.



AMARYLLIS

The popular 'Amaryllis' bulbs offered for sale in autumn are really varieties of Hippeastrum. There are similarities between the two - both are large bulbs which produce clusters of Lily-like flowers on thick stalks. There are, however, a number of basic differences. The Amaryllis flowers are smaller and appear after the foliage has died down. Another difference is that Hippeastrum is strictly an indoor plant whereas Amaryllis can be grown outdoors in a bed next to a sunny south-facing wall. For indoor display set the bulb in a 15cm pot in March with its tip just above the compost.

INDOOR BULB PROBLEMS

- * **YELLOW LEAVES** - The usual reason is draughts. Other causes could be incorrect watering and insufficient light levels.
- * **BUDS FAIL TO OPEN** - Erratic watering and wetting buds by careless watering can cause buds to die without opening.
- * **LONG LIMP LEAVES** - A sign of keeping the bowl in the dark for too long or too little light at flowering time.
- * **NO FLOWERS** - Dry compost will inhibit flowering. Keeping the bowl too warm or bringing it in too quickly into bright sunlight will also have this effect.

Information sourced from the PBI BULB EXPERT (Dr D.G. Hessayon)