

Success with Perennials

Perennials are defined as plants that return in the garden 3 years or more from the same root base. Their bloom cycles vary from early to late season, short and long lived, but they can adapt, grow, and naturalize in places where annuals cannot, and once established are less overall maintenance.

When inspecting your garden site consider the amount of sunlight in the area, soil type, wind, rainfall, irrigation, and fertilizer. Most sun loving perennials prefer 6+ hours of direct sun; part-shade plants need 4-6 hours of sun, and shade tolerant plants require 4 hours or less.

Perennials thrive in various soil conditions, but most prefer well-drained, nutrient rich soil, worked 10-12" deep. This can be achieved by adding 2-3" of organic matter, peat, compost, manure, or Petitti Planting Mix each season. Then apply a slow-release fertilizer, such as Osmocote or Whitney Farms All Purpose Plant Food at least once in the spring and again in late summer.

After planting, cover the soil with 1-2" of organic mulch, such as pine bark or hardwood, being careful not to cover the crowns of the plants. The mulch will suppress weed growth and hold in moisture to keep the roots cool.

Irrigate 1" of water per week for the first growing season and your perennials will flourish.

During the growing season, be sure to remove spent flowers by deadheading/ shearing. Deadheading will not only promote more blooms, but also increases stem strength to reduce staking, and will prevent insect and disease problems.

Also try reducing weeds throughout the season by carefully spraying a non-selective herbicide such as Round Up, or applying a weed seed killer like Preen.

Once perennials get too large for an area or their bloom cycle declines try dividing and transplanting. Do this the opposite season they bloom; mid-summer bloomers can be divided spring or fall. At the end of the season a hard fall frost will kill the tops of many perennials indicating that it is time to clean them up. Cut the stems and foliage back to just above the soil level.

Leave your winter interest perennials up until next spring. Suggestions for each condition are listed on the following pages. these topics.

Full Sun

Achillea (Yarrow)
 Alcea (Hollyhocks)
 Gaillardia (Blanket Flower)
 Heliopsis (Perennial Sunflower)
 Iris
 Liatris (Blazing Star)
 Papaver (Poppy)
 Perovskia (Russian Sage)
 Salvia (Meadow Sage)
 Sedum

Part-Shade

Aquilegia (Columbine)
 Baptisia (False Indigo)
 Centranthus (Valerian)
 Hemerocallis (Daylily)
 Hypericum (St. John's Wort)
 Lychnis (Rose Campion)
 Monarda (Bee Balm)
 Sidalcea (Checkermallow)
 Tradescantia (Spiderwort)
 Veronica (Speedwell)

Shade*

Astilbe
 Chelone (Turtlehead)
 Cimicifuga (Bug Bane)
 Hosta
 Ligularia (The Rocket)
 Polemonium (Jacob's Ladder)
 Primula (Primrose)
 Pulmonaria (Lungwort)
 Tiarella (Foam Flower)
 Trollius (Globe Flower)

Groundcovers

Ajuga
 Arabis/Aubrieta (Rock Cress)
 Arenaria (Sandwort)
 Cerastium (Snow in Summer)
 Convallaria (Lily of the Valley)
 Cotula (Brass Buttons)
 Dianthus
 Galium (Sweet Woodruff)
 Glechoma
 Ivy
 Lamium (Dead Nettle)
 Laurentia (Blue Star Creeper)
 Lysmachia (Moneywort)
 Mazus
 Pachysandra
 Phlox
 Sagina (Irish Moss)
 Saponaria (Soapwort)
 Sedum (Stonecrop)
 Thymus (Thyme)
 Trifolium
 Veronica (Speedwell)
 Vinca (Myrtle)

For Spring Color

Arabis (Rock Cress)
 Bellis (English Daisy)
 Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)
 Epimedium (Barrenwort)
 Helleborus (Lenten Rose)
 Iris
 Myosotis (Forget-Me-Not)
 Phlox
 Primula (Primrose)
 Viola

For Summer Color

Astilbe
 Delphinium
 Hemerocallis (Daylily)
 Leucanthemum (Shasta Daisy)
 Liatris (Gayfeather)
 Lilium (Lilies)
 Monarda (Bee Balm)
 Penstemon (Beardtongue)
 Phlox (Garden Phlox)
 Stokesia (Stokes Aster)

For Fall Color*

Anemone (Wind Flower)
 Asters
 Chrysanthemum
 Cimicifuga (Bug Bane)
 Helenium (Helen's Flower)
 Hibiscus
 Lobelia (Cardinal Flower)
 Ornamental Grasses
 Solidago (Golden Rod)
 Tricyrtis (Toad Lily)
 Heuchera (Coral Bells)
 Ornamental Grasses
 Perovskia (Russian Sage)
 Rudbeckia (Black Eyed Susan)
 Sedum

Long-Blooming Perennials*

Achillea (Yarrow)
 Anthemis (Marguerites)
 Coreopsis (Tickseed)
 Dicentra luxuriant
 Echinacea (Coneflower)
 Gaillardia (Blanket Flower)
 Geranium
 Hemerocallis 'Stella' & 'Happy'
 Rudbeckia (Black-Eyed Susan)
 Scabiosa (Pincushion Flower)

Sunny/Dry Soil

Anemone Pulsatilla (Pasque Flower)
 Arabis (Rock Cress)
 Armeria (Sea Thrift)
 Dianthus (Pinks)
 Iberis (Candytuft)
 Lavandula (Lavender)
 Nepeta (Cat Mint)
 Sagina (Irish Moss)
 Saxifraga
 Sempervivum (Hens & Chicks)

Shady/Dry Soil

Anemone (Windflower)
 Bergenia
 Brunnera (Chinese Forget-Me-Not)
 Corydalis
 Epimedium (Barrenwort)
 Filipendula (Queen of the Prairie)
 Galium (Sweet Woodruff)
 Hosta
 Liriope (Lilyturf)
 Male Fern

Shady/Wet Soil

Astilbe
 Aстранtia
 Carex (Sedge)
 Chelone (Turtlehead)
 Ligularia
 Lobelia (Cardinal Flower)
 Fern (Cinnamon, Lady, Ostrich)
 Myosotis (Forget-Me-Not)
 Primula
 Trollius (Globe Flower)

Sunny/ Wet Soil

Eupatorium (Joe Pye Weed)
 Heliopsis (Ox-Eyed Daisy)
 Helenium (Helen's Flower)
 Hibiscus
 Iris (except Bearded types)
 Lysmachia
 Miscanthus (Maiden Grass)
 Monarda (Bee Balm)
 Physostegia (Obedient Plant)

****Additional information sheets available on website.***



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