

Fall Mums or Hardy Chrysanthemums are *Dendranthema morifolium*. Mums come in hundreds of varieties adding a rainbow of color to your garden in late summer and fall while your annuals slowly fade. They easily complement many other late season perennials and transition nicely into container gardens with blooms lasting through October (see chart below). Keep in mind the following when planting your mums:

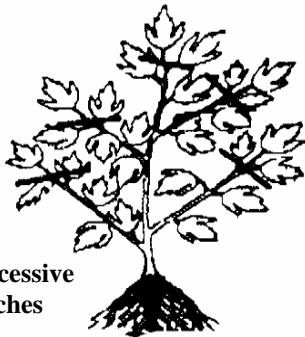
Planting & Fertilizing

Mums need to be planted in well-drained, nutrient rich soil, in full sun (6+ hours of sunlight per day). They are heavy feeders and drainage is crucial for their winter survival. Plant your mums in the garden mixing one part Petitti's Planting Mix with one part of your existing soil adding Plant-tone and Iron-tone, and watering well. In a container use planting mix or Petitti Potting Soil with a couple inches of drainage material at the base of the container then adding fertilizer and water. Remember to fertilize in spring as the new growth emerges and again in mid-summer with Osmocote. One final tip, plant your mums as soon as possible before frost. They require 4-8 weeks to get their roots established to become winter hardy, otherwise they should be considered annuals.

First Pinch



Successive Pinches



Pinching

Pinch the tips of your mums from spring to mid-summer. This will create a bushier, heavily flowered plant. Start when the spring growth reaches six inches tall. Pinch off the top two inches of growth. This will stimulate more new growth. Repeat the process when the growth reaches six inches again, and continue pinching through mid-late July. Do NOT pinch after late July, for your mum may not bloom before frost.

Protection over winter

If your mums are planted in well-drained soil then all you will need to do is apply three to six inches of mulch at the base of the plants after the ground freezes in the late autumn. Mums have very shallow roots that are susceptible to frost damage. Let the plants die back naturally the first winter in the ground, then cut them back early spring down to the new growth being produced. In containers, place the mums in a cold garage, water lightly once a month and return them gradually back to the garden in spring cutting back to new growth as mentioned above.

Blooming Period (on plant tags)

Very early
Early
Midseason
Late
Early Season Extender
Late Season Extender

When they begin to bloom

Late August to the first week in September
Second week in September
Third week in September
Late September to first week in October
Second week in October
End of October