



FORCED SPRING BULBS, HYDRANGEAS & AZALEAS

Hardy, perennial bulbs (daffodils, crocus, hyacinth, etc.) are tricked or forced to bloom earlier than normal to be enjoyed indoors for their fragrance and flowering during winter into early spring. They can be grown in any light and temperature indoors, but the more light and heat the bulbs are exposed to, the faster they will bloom and fade. It is best to keep them in cool conditions, bright indirect lighting, and their soil evenly moist to slightly dry. Forced bulbs can tolerate cold drafts, light frosts, and can be stored in a cold garage or the refrigerator at night to keep flowers tight and fresh. Use them in early spring container gardens outdoors combined with cyclamen, pansies, violas, primrose, and other cold tolerant, early flowering perennials. After flowering is finished, remove the spent flowers and their stems, and leave the foliage. In spring, plant the bulbs in a sunny, well-drained area applying Bulb-tone® to the planting hole. Cut back the foliage to the ground when it turns yellow.

Tender, annual bulbs (calla lilies, ranunculus, Easter lilies*) require bright indirect light indoors to part shade (4-6 hours of direct sunlight) outdoors. Evenly moist to slightly dry soil conditions are best for growing both inside and out. Tender bulbs can be planted in containers and enjoyed outside if protected from frost and cold temperatures (below 45° F). They can be installed in a garden after the last spring frost (approx. mid-May). When they finish blooming, remove the flowers, but continue to care for the foliage (keep green & healthy) until autumn. After a couple of fall frosts, dig and lift the bulbs, remove excess soil, and let dry out for several days. Store the bulbs over winter in a vented, cardboard box in dry peat or shredded paper in a cool (50-60° F), dry place. In early spring, replant tender bulbs in pots with fresh potting mix placed in the basement or garage. Start watering, lighting, and feeding the bulbs to force new growth and give them a head start in the garden when it is safe to plant outdoors in spring. Use Bulb-tone® or Osmocote® to fertilize in containers and gardens during the growing season.

**Easter lilies are cold hardy in Zone 5 but need to be in a protected site with well-drained soil to thrive.*

Forced Hydrangea:

Mophead & Lace cap hydrangea, (*H. macrophylla*), are traditional varieties used by growers to create gorgeous spring blooming plants. Their blue, pink, and white showy blossoms can be admired indoors in bright indirect light, average moisture, and cooler indoor temperatures (55-65° F). Plant outdoors when blooms fade, after the last chance of frost. They perform best in part shade, average to moist soils and fertilized with Plant-tone® and Iron-tone® in the spring and midsummer. Their color can be manipulated to purple/blue by applying Aluminum Sulphate and an acidic fertilizer like Holly-tone®. They do require winter protection (wrapping their stems in burlap and mulching 4-6") to bud and bloom next year.

Florist Azaleas are forced, non-hardy azalea varieties that are meant to be enjoyed indoors, as a colorful houseplant for approximately 3-4 weeks. Expose them to bright indirect light, average moisture, high humidity, and cooler indoor temperatures (55-65°F) for longer lasting blooms. Their evergreen foliage will persist and can be kept in a container year-round. Fertilize with Holly-tone® as directed.



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location
information

