

# Annuals

**What are they?** Annuals are plants that do not survive past a year and are meant to add vibrant splashes of colour to your garden. Spring annuals get planted in Spring and usually last until Fall. Fall annuals get planted in Fall and usually last until winter.



**Preparing the soil** requires a bit of work but is crucial for providing optimal growing conditions for your annuals. Loosen up heavy, clay soils by adding peat moss, sand or compost. This improves drainage. For all soil types, add an all purpose fertilizer like 6-8-6 and work it into the soil so that it is well-distributed. Smooth down the bed with a rake or hoe and it is ready for planting.

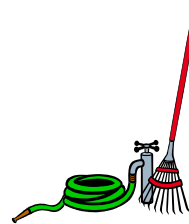


**Planting** in a sunny location with good drainage is more important to most annuals than the quality of the soil you plant them in.

Use the colourful brilliance of annuals to fill empty spaces between shrubs, perennials or rows of vegetables. Annuals are a great way to brighten your garden while waiting for perennials to bloom.

Annuals do not like being fed with too much nitrogen. Too much nitrogen prompts an abundance of green growth and not enough flower power. Instead, feed your annuals every 3-4 weeks with a fertilizer high in phosphorous.

**Watering** is essential when establishing newly-planted annuals and also for maintaining mature specimens. Before planting,



thoroughly water your new annuals in the container they came in. Then wet the soil area where the annual will be planted, and water the annual once it is planted.

Give the plants a good soaking at ground level whenever the soil begins to dry. Avoid overhead watering as wet foliage encourages the development of plant disease.

**Pruning and grooming** are important for some annuals to encourage bushy

and vigorous growth and continuous blooming. Use your thumb and forefinger to pinch the growing tip on the main stem just above the leaves. This promotes branching and a bushier habit.



Most annuals thrive best in a sunny position, but the following varieties prefer shade or are shade-tolerant:

- Begonia - Wax & Tuberous
- Coleus
- Forget-me-Not
- Fuchsia
- Impatiens
- Lobelia
- Mimulus
- Nasturtium
- Nicotiana
- Salvia
- Torenia
- Vinca