



J&L Garden Center

The All Season Gift
and Garden Center

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Hydrangea Care

Planting hydrangea can be a fun and rewarding experience. Once the beautifully bright bloom has emerged, all the work involved in planting a hydrangea will pay off. The first step of enjoying a hydrangea is choosing the proper location for best results. The site chosen must have a good deal of direct sunlight daily, but some shade is also needed. The soil must be dry to moist and have good drainage to prevent root rot. Knowing the pH level of the soil will help to predict the color of the blooms, and help you fine-tune the blossom color. Adding some lime to the soil will turn the bloom pink - not until the following growing season. Supplying the soil with aluminum sulfate will lower the soil pH and make the blooms turn a blue tint - not until the following growing season. Growing hydrangea can be very rewarding when the blooms are large, and they grow and change colors according to your desires.



Growing hydrangeas can be easy if you learn the basics. They require very little care, as long as the proper conditions are met. Hydrangeas need full, to partial sun, in order to bloom. Hydrangeas will thrive in a variety of soil and water conditions. Good drainage is essential to help prevent root rot. Once established, hydrangeas are fairly drought resistant. Hydrangeas are hardy in zones 3 through 9. Since we live in zone 4, some winter preparation may be necessary for winter survival.



An important thing to note, when growing hydrangeas, is the ability some varieties have to change bloom color, based on the pH level of the soil. The bloom will be blue in more acidic soil, and pink in soil that has a higher pH. However, not all hydrangea varieties can change color. Those that are naturally white will remain white no matter what soil type they're grown in.

Planting Tips for Hydrangeas

Choose a location where your hydrangea can reach its full size without much pruning. For normal sized hydrangeas, expect the plant to reach about 4 ft. by 4 ft. Some varieties can reach 7ft to 15ft tall by 5ft to 10ft wide.



Plant in well-drained, loose soil! If the soil is heavy, add roughage such as Utelite, Soil Pep, or Black Forest Compost. In severe cases, plant them on top of a mound, or grow them in containers.

Place your hydrangea in an area where it can get plenty of moisture. Consistent soil moisture is especially important the first year or two, and during the hot summer weather. Do not over water, especially in clay soil. Too much water can lead to root rot.

Do not plant too deeply. Plant at the same depth the hydrangea was planted in the pot. Plant in early summer or late fall, not during the heat of summer.

If you want to move your hydrangea, transplant it when it is dormant and has lost all of its leaves (late fall or winter).

Hydrangeas planted under a tree often fail to thrive. This is because tree roots are very aggressive and are usually stronger than hydrangea roots. No matter how many of the tree roots you are able to remove to make room for the hydrangeas, the tree roots will all be back in a year or two. Watch plants closely.

Fertilizing Tips for Hydrangeas

Hydrangeas grow best if they are fertilized once or twice each year. Although some gardeners recommend special hydrangea fertilizer mixes to get the maximum results, hydrangeas do amazingly well with many of the common types of fertilizers you normally use. You can add organic material to the soil, such as manure or compost, and apply either an organic or a chemical fertilizer.



Organic fertilizers are excellent because they are naturally slow releasing. The plant benefit from the long lasting fertilizers. If chemical fertilizers are used, apply a slow-release, balanced fertilizer once or twice a year. Fertilizer such as Rose Fertilizer, Vegetable Fertilizer, Rhododendron Fertilizer or even a 10-10-10 fertilizer will work well if you apply them twice during the spring and summer. Osmocote fertilizer is great but it must be mixed into the soil to release properly for the entire season, don't just leave it on top of the soil.



Don't fertilize after August. Fall is the time for hydrangeas to begin preparing for dormancy. Fertilizing too late may stimulate new growth that may be tender.

The amount of fertilizer used per plant will vary with the size of the plant. As a general rule, it is much better to err on the side of too little fertilizer than too much. A very small plant will need about 1/8 - 1/4 cup. A very large shrub will need 2 - 3 cups, spread around the drip line of the branches (not just next to the trunk). Read the fertilizer label to determine exactly how much fertilizer you need to apply.

Never fertilize a plant that looks sick or wilted. If a plant is struggling due to a disease or root problems, the fertilizer will only add stress to it's life. Try to cure the problem before adding fertilizer.

Finally, to give your hydrangea the best chance for maximum blooming, fertilize your plant once or twice during the summer with **Fertilome Blooming and Rooting Fertilizer**. This liquid fertilizer will give your plant instant access to those elements that will promote large blossoms, especially to the pink varieties.



Hydrangea Species

While there are approximately 23 species of *Hydrangea* grown throughout the world, only six are widely cultivated in the U.S..

Hydrangea macrophylla is the most popular species. It is commonly known as bigleaf, French, garden, or florist's hydrangea. It produces large inflorescences of white, pink or blue flowers in early summer. As with most other hydrangea species, the inflorescence is composed of a combination of both large, showy flowers, and small, inconspicuous flowers. Most varieties in this species are hardy to zone 5. This species has the most cultivated varieties available to choose from, and can give the showiest results in your home garden.



Hydrangea serrata is related to the Bigleaf Hydrangeas, but has a more delicate appearance, with slender stems, narrow leaves and smaller flowers. It is a smaller and more compact shrub. It was formerly listed as *Hydrangea macrophylla* var. *serrata*. It is native to mountain woodlands of Japan and Korea and is hardier than *H. macrophylla*. It grows to 3 to 5 feet in height, with flower color ranging from blue to pink to crimson.



Hydrangea paniculata is the most cold hardy member of the hydrangea genus. It can be reliably grown in zones 4 to 7. It is native to Asia. It can grow 10 to 15 feet tall. It has large, creamy-white flowers, which are borne in 6- to 18-inch long panicles, and are produced in mid-summer. As flowers mature, they may turn pink. Plants, particularly those of the cultivar *H. 'Pee Gee'*, are sometime pruned into a tree form. *Hydrangea paniculata* is also suitable for use in a mixed border or as a deciduous hedge.



Hydrangea quercifolia - Oakleaf hydrangea is one of two hydrangea species that are native in the U.S.. Plants generally grow 6 to 8 feet in height, although a few cultivars with smaller growth habits are available. Large panicles of creamy white flowers (4 to 12 inches) are produced in early summer. As flowers age, they often turn a medium- to deep-rose color. Oakleaf hydrangea is the only member of the genus to develop significant fall foliage color. Leaves turn a deep mahogany-red and stay on the plant until late fall. Exfoliating bark adds to winter interest. Oakleaf hydrangea is best used in a mixed border, or as a mass planting. They are hardy from zones 5 to 9.



Hydrangea arborescens - Smooth hydrangea is the other U.S. native. In cultivation, plants usually reach about 5 feet in height, with a similar or greater spread. The species is rated as hardy from Zones 4 to 9. Flowering occurs in early to mid-summer. The most common cultivar, 'Annabelle', produces rounded inflorescences that may reach up to a foot in diameter. Plants may also have a lacecap type inflorescence consisting of a combination of a few large, and many small, flowers. At the peak of flowering, smooth hydrangea flowers are a pure white. As they age, they develop a pale green color. Smooth hydrangea is extremely striking in mass plantings.



Hydrangea anomala 'petiolaris' - Climbing hydrangea is not as well-known as the previous four species, however it is becoming more popular. It is hardy from zones 4 to 7. Climbing hydrangea is a true clinging vine. While initially slow growing, the plant



can eventually cover tall (up to 80 feet) structures. White, lacecap type inflorescences are produced in early- to mid-summer. Plants can be slow to start flowering, but patience is rewarded by a spectacular floral display on established plants. An alternative to planting climbing hydrangea on the side of a building, is to allow it to climb up a tall tree or to cascade over a horizontal surface like a rock pile. Climbing hydrangea grows well in shade, but can also tolerate a sunny location.

Hydrangea Blooming Problems

There are three possibilities for lack of flowering among the hydrangea species: too much shade, improper pruning, and winter injury. The first two – too much shade and improper pruning – apply to all hydrangeas. The other – weather-related damage to flower buds – applies primarily to the bigleaf hydrangea.



Most *hydrangea* species benefit from some shade. Plants grown in hot areas require more shade than do those grown in the cooler areas. However, too much shade can reduce flowering. This is particularly true of oakleaf and panicle hydrangea species, which are two *Hydrangea* species that grow best in full sun. If you have a hydrangea that used to bloom well, but now flowers only sparsely, evaluate whether the growth of nearby trees has reduced the amount of light that reaches the hydrangea. If so, you may want to consider moving the hydrangea plant to a sunnier location.

Improper pruning can reduce flowering in *Hydrangea*. Since bigleaf and oakleaf hydrangeas flower on previous year's growth, potential flower buds will be removed if the plants are pruned in fall, winter or spring. If you want to prune a *H. macrophylla* for size or shape, do it right after the hydrangea blooms, just as the flowers begin to fade. If you wait too long, or prune in the spring, you will be cutting off the new flower buds for the next bloom period. The only pruning you should do in the spring is to remove dead wood.

Panicle and smooth hydrangeas flower on the current year's growth. Wait to prune them during the dormant season. Pruning them in spring or early summer would reduce, or even eliminate, flowering for that year.



The most common reason for lack of flowering in the bigleaf hydrangea is unfavorable weather. Most *H. macrophylla* cultivars flower primarily on previous year's growth. Weather conditions that damage above-ground parts of the plant can reduce flowering. Damaging weather conditions include early fall freezes that occur before the plant is completely dormant, extremely low winter temperatures, and late spring freezes that occur after the plant has broken dormancy.

The most common of these unfavorable weather events is late spring freezes that damage tender new growth. This is particularly true where "see-saw" temperatures are very common in the spring. Bigleaf hydrangea responds quickly to warm temperatures in late winter and early spring by breaking dormancy and producing new leaves. Unfortunately, these spells of warm weather are often followed by periods in which temperatures reach well below freezing.

The severity of the damage caused by these freezes depends on how many of the buds had broken dormancy. If a substantial portion of the buds on a stem were actively growing, the whole branch may die. For some cultivars, the loss of the



above ground part of the plant will completely eliminate flowering during the summer. The plant will produce new buds, from the base of the stems, but stems produced from these buds will not flower the coming season.

Winter and early spring protection may save the flowers on these hydrangeas, but often some are just too tender, even with extra protection.

There are some varieties of hydrangeas whose flower buds survive the winter very well. Other varieties form their flower buds in the spring rather than the fall. Improved cultivars are being developed every year. Some of the newer cultivars include '*Endless Summer*', '*Blushing Bride*', '*Nikko Blue*', '*All Summer Beauty*', '*Penny Mac*', '*Venice Raven*', '*Berlin Rabe*', '*Vienna Rawi*', '*Limelight*' and '*Rio*'.

The blooming hydrangea plants that are sold for gifts are often too tender to survive and bloom outdoors. Enjoy them while they bloom and discard them when finished.

How do I change the color of my hydrangea?

Hydrangeas are fascinating in that, unlike most other plants, the color of their flowers can change dramatically. It would be nice if one could change the color of hydrangeas easily, but for most of us, it is not easy. The people who have the most control over the color of their hydrangeas are those who grow them in containers. It is much easier to control or alter the pH of the soil in a container than it is in the ground.



There are a few facts to remember.

* **Not all hydrangea varieties can change color.** Those that are naturally white will remain white no matter what soil type they're grown in.

* If your plant is in a hot climate, it is unlikely you will ever see a "true red" hydrangea. No matter how convincing those pictures in the catalogs are, or how much lime is added to the soil, you can only achieve a very deep or dark pink, but not a true red.

* **It is much easier to change a hydrangea from pink to blue than it is from blue to pink.**

* Hydrangeas often change color on their own when they are first planted, or transplanted. They are adjusting to their new environment. It is not unusual to see several different colors on one shrub the year after planting.



* One can rarely change the intensity of a color (how strong or pale the color is). The intensity develops for a number of reasons: the heredity of a particular hydrangea variety, weather conditions (hot or cold, humid or dry), health of the plant, and possibly other natural factors.

* There are a few cultivars that never produce blue flowers. In low pH soils, flowers of these "non-bluing" cultivars turn a dull reddish-purple. In higher pH soils, the flowers of these cultivars are a vivid deep pink color. Some non-bluing cultivars are 'Alpengluhen', 'Pia', and 'Kardinal'.

Color Confusions:

The actual hydrangea flower is small and insignificant but is surrounded by showy, colorful bracts. The anthocyanin pigment will be either pink or blue, depending upon the amount of either iron or aluminum in its molecules. Insufficient aluminum is absorbed by the plant at a pH of 6.5 to 7.0 so the plant uses iron instead.



As the pH drops to 5.0 to 5.5, aluminum becomes more soluble. It is absorbed by the plant and becomes part of the anthocyanin molecule resulting in blue coloration. The molecule uses less iron.



The actual color of the pink and blue varies and is determined by the degree of soil acidity.

White hydrangeas contain no pigment in their sepals (although some may develop as the blossom ages). They may be grown as either pink or blue, the only indication being given by the small petals.

Change to Pink

For hydrangea blooms to be pink, the plants **must not take up aluminum from the soil**. If the soil naturally contains aluminum, you must try to keep it away from the hydrangea's system. Following are a few tips that might help:



Add dolomitic lime several times a year. This will help to raise the pH. The pH should be about 6.0 to 6.9 (If it goes above 7.1 hydrangeas may experience an iron deficiency). Since hydrangeas take up aluminum best at lower pH levels, raising the pH will help to keep the bluing effect of aluminum out of the hydrangea's system.

Use a fertilizer with high levels of phosphorus. Phosphorus helps to prevent aluminum from entering into the system of the hydrangea. Choose a fertilizer close to the ratio of 25/10/10 (Phosphorus is the middle number).

In areas that naturally produce blue hydrangeas (soils with a lot of aluminum), consider growing pink hydrangeas in large pots. In a pot, it is much easier to control the requirements for growing pink hydrangeas.

Change to Blue

To obtain a blue hydrangea, aluminum must be present in the soil. Most garden soils have adequate aluminum, but the aluminum may not be available to the plant if the soil pH is high. To ensure that aluminum is present, add aluminum sulfate to the soil around the hydrangeas. Some gardeners also recommend that a solution of 1 Tbsp aluminum sulfate per gallon of water be applied to plants (which are at least 2-3 years old) throughout the growing season. **Important:** Do not apply the mixture on leaves, and water plants well in advance of application. Put this solution on cautiously, as too much can burn the roots.



To make the aluminum, **already in the soil**, available to the plant, the pH of the soil should be low (5.2-5.5). Adding sulfur will tend to lower the pH of the soil. Another method for lowering the pH is to add organic matter to the soil such as coffee grounds, peatmoss, acid planting mix, grass clippings, etc. If the soil naturally contains aluminum and is acid (low pH) the color of the hydrangea will automatically tend toward shades of blue and purple.

The choice of fertilizer will also affect the blue color change. A fertilizer low in phosphorus and high in potassium is helpful in producing a good blue color. Superphosphate and bone meal should be avoided when trying to produce blue hydrangeas.

Planting hydrangeas near a concrete foundation or sidewalk will often affect the color since the pH of the soil may be raised considerably by lime leaching out of the concrete, making it difficult to have the blue color.

While these methods of changing the flower color can be used, you risk severely altering the soil pH incorrectly, thereby making it difficult for the plant to utilize other nutrients. You can also affect other, non pH adjusted plants, growing nearby. The pH of a soil is very important to all plants, not just hydrangeas.

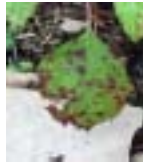
Always get the soil pH tested before trying to change it. If you really like different colors in your hydrangeas then plant many different cultivars together!

If you would like to try a more carefree hydrangea, try the *Hydrangea quercifolia* - **Oakleaf Hydrangea**. It is a beautiful shrub for all seasons of the year. It has white flowers in the summer that fade to shades of pink and brown as they mature. The leaves turn red in the fall before they drop. The shrub has a beautiful open shape and brown, exfoliating bark that adds interest to your garden in the winter. It prefers light to medium shade, but tolerates sun or moderately dense shade. Another easy hydrangea is *H. paniculata*. It is a large shrub that can be trained into a small single or multi stemmed tree. Flowers are generally white, but some tend towards pale pink or green, depending upon the cultivar.



Insect and Diseases

While hydrangeas in landscape settings are relatively pest free, under certain growing conditions some diseases and insects can become problems. For the bigleaf hydrangea, the major disease problem is powdery mildew. It is most common on plants growing in shade and under high humidity conditions. Powdery mildew infested leaves are covered with a light gray powdery-looking substance. Purple splotches may also appear. Powdery mildew rarely kills plants, but it is unattractive.



There are several fungal leaf spot organisms that attack *hydrangea*. Leaves develop brown to gray lesions surrounded by purple halos. These leaf spots are most common in late summer and early fall, and seem to be more common among plants grown in sunny locations. Again, plants are rarely killed, but severe infestation can be very unattractive.



Some hydrangeas are susceptible to rust, which will appear on the back side of leaves as small, orange spots. Rubbing the back of the leaves will release an orange dust which contains spores of the fungus. The disease is usually seen near the end of the growing season and rarely kills plants.

It is important to prevent leaf diseases rather than try to cure them. If your hydrangea is prone to any of these diseases, spray with a fungicide once a month to prevent them. You may need to spray every two weeks to control a disease once it starts to appear.

Some hydrangeas are susceptible to root rots. The most common is *Armillaria* root rot. Infested plants will appear wilted, but will not recover when watered, and they will eventually die. Planting hydrangeas in poorly drained soils will increase the incidence of root rot and should be avoided.

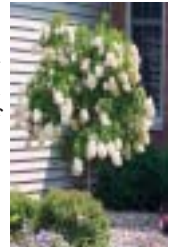
Aphids can be a problem on the new growth of all hydrangeas, but can be easily controlled by washing, using an insecticidal soap, or spraying an insecticide. The presence of ants crawling on plant leaves is often an indicator of an aphid problem. The ants feed on the sticky honeydew (excrement) left by the aphids. If you see ants on the leaves of your hydrangeas,



turn the youngest leaves on the plant over and look for small green insects. As leaves become tougher during the growing season, aphid problems usually diminish. Mites can cause problems on hydrangeas. Mites are too small to see with the naked eye, but mite infestation can cause distorted growth, mainly seen in new shoots. Webbing between leaves will also be noticed with spider mites. Mite problems are usually worse during hot, dry weather. Adequate watering of plants during hot weather is the best preventative against mite problems. Mites are difficult for the homeowner to control using insecticides.

Pruning:

Established *bigleaf*, *panicle*, *oakleaf* and *smooth* hydrangea plants can often benefit from regular pruning. Removing about one-third of the oldest stems each year will result in a fuller, healthier plant. This type of pruning is easiest to do in winter, since the absence of leaves makes it easier to see and reach inside plants.



Gardeners may also want to prune to control height or to remove old flower heads. The best time for this type of pruning differs between species. Bigleaf and oakleaf hydrangea, which flower on previous year's growth, should be pruned shortly after flowering is complete.

Panicle and smooth hydrangea flower on current year's growth. They can be pruned anytime from late summer until early spring. If pruning these two species in the spring, try to prune before leaves appear. Plants of *H. arborescens* 'Annabelle' have been known to produce a second flush of flowers if pruned lightly after the first flowering.

Hydrangea paniculata This is a commonly planted hydrangea because of its massive displays of large white flowers in mid-to-late summer. They gradually turn to pink and remain on the plant in a semi-dried condition long after the leaves have fallen. Pruning involves the removal of dead flowers, if unattractive, and an annual corrective pruning of vigorous shoots. Thin or cut back the previous season's growth in late winter or early spring, since flower clusters occur on newly developing branches. Without regular pruning, this hydrangea can become quite overgrown, and out of scale in the landscape. It can also be pruned into a single, or multi-stemmed, tree form.

Hydrangea macrophylla Pruning can be accomplished at two different times: early-spring or late-summer. Late summer is best, since most varieties flower only from the end buds of upright or lateral shoots, produced during late summer and fall of the previous season. Prune as soon as the flowers have faded, and strong shoots are developing from the lower parts of the stems and crown. Remove some of the weaker shoots, either old or new. Always try to keep several stems of old productive wood, with a sufficient number of stout new stems that will flower the following season. Pruning this species too late in the fall (after September) is harmful. New growth may not develop properly to mature in time for winter.

Early spring pruning (March), although acceptable, will result in the sacrificing of blossoms for that growing season. Stems of bigleaf hydrangea that have been damaged by cold, should be pruned as soon as it is determined that they are dead. Watch for new growth at the base of the plant. If your plant has basal shoots that are 6 to 8 inches in length, but the upper parts of the stems are still bare, then the bare stems need to be removed. For bigleaf hydrangea plants that are subject to frequent weather-

related dieback, other than removing the dead stems, you probably won't ever need to do any other pruning – Mother Nature has been doing the work for you.

***Hydrangea quercifolia* —Oakleaf Hydrangea** This plant is grown primarily for its handsome oak leaf-shaped foliage, excellent fall color, attractive flowers and interesting winter bark. It is ideally suited to a lightly shaded or protected location, and if grown in an exposed site, it is subject to some winter dieback. Prune back in early spring to remove dead wood. Cut back to below the point of injury and remove old wood to the base.

Hydrangea arborescens You can prune smooth hydrangea to the ground line each winter or early spring, because it flowers abundantly on new growth. It is frequently killed back during severe winters. If a larger shrub is desired (3+ feet) or it is not killed back over the winter, you can prune less severely. Remove some branches to the ground; cut others back at varying heights from 1 to 3 feet.

***Hydrangea anomala petiolaris* — Climbing Hydrangea** Climbing hydrangea is a desirable, mid-summer flowering vine that attaches itself by aerial roots to brick, masonry or wood. It requires little or no pruning. If certain shoots have grown out of bounds, reduce their length in summer. Frequently, concern is expressed about climbing vines that may be inundating a tree and causing irreparable damage. This is possible with climbing hydrangeas, but not very likely.

Winter Care

Proper hydrangea winter care will determine the success and quantity of next summer's blooms. The key to hydrangeas winter protection is to protect your plant prior to the first frost of winter, and through the last frost the following spring.



The first step in hydrangea winter care is to cut away the old wood at the base of the plant, and remove any dead or weak branches. Be careful not to cut off healthy wood, as this wood will be where your hydrangea will bloom from next year.

Make a frame around the plant by using stakes. Wrap chicken wire around the stakes to form a cage. Fill the cage with bark or leaves to fully insulate your plant. Be careful not to snap off the ends of the branches as you fill the cage, or you won't have those gorgeous blooms next summer.



Protecting hydrangeas from winter cold and wind can seem labor intensive. However, once you have your plant's winter home in place, the remainder of the winter will only require a little housekeeping to maintain successful hydrangea winter protection.

Holiday Plants:

Most of the 'florists' Hydrangeas, that are sold as potted plants, are a delicate variety of *Hydrangea macrophylla*. Most florist hydrangeas will not produce flowers when planted outside, because their buds are not cold hardy.



If you receive a potted hydrangea for Easter or Mother's Day in full bloom, keep the soil moist at all times, as this plant has a high water requirement and tends to dry rapidly in the home. It should also receive direct light. After the flowers fade, they may be removed and the plant treated as a house plant. When danger of frost is past, you can try planting it in a sheltered

location in the garden. Shelter is necessary because the hardiness of this plant is questionable. This plant forms flower buds in the fall, like forsythia and wisteria. If these buds freeze, the plant will survive and produce green leaves, but no flowers.

Planting in a sheltered location, plus covering the plant with burlap, will offer some protection. If you wish to improve the probability of flower bud survival, you may wish to try protecting them even more. Before the temperature falls to 25 degrees F, place a screen around the plant. Fill this with an insulating material such as coarse peat moss, vermiculite or bark. More material may be added if it settles during the winter. Remove this protection when the crocuses flower but you must still protect them on cold nights. If you are lucky, the flower buds will survive. If not, you should still have a pretty foliage plant.

Cut Flowers

Hydrangeas make excellent cut flowers and the dried blooms make beautiful arrangements. The key to successfully drying hydrangeas is to cut them at the right time.



As hydrangea flowers age on the plant, they often turn attractive colors. Bigleaf hydrangea flowers may develop muted tones of blue, purple, rose, violet and green. Panicle and oakleaf flowers develop pink and rose colors, while smooth hydrangea flowers turn pale green. Even the white hydrangeas will turn colors as they age, and most commonly they will turn slightly green, but some may also turn light pink or even burgundy.



Unfortunately, it's difficult to dry hydrangea blooms that have been cut at their peak of color. For best results, allow the blossoms to dry on the plant before cutting them. Do not collect them until the flowers have developed a papery feel.

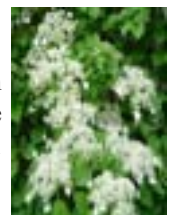
After collecting the blooms, they can be placed in a dry, airy room out of direct sunlight until fully dried. They may be left standing in a dry vase or hung upside down. Either method works well. Strip off all leaves and then find a dry place indoors where the flowers can finish drying. Some people recommend using a warm, dark location, such as an attic. Others prefer a cool, dry location. Whichever method you choose, be sure to keep individual inflorescences separated as they dry so that none of the flowers get squashed. The flower heads of some cultivars dry better than others.



The method used to dry them isn't nearly as important as the timing for gathering the blooms.

Hydrangea Variety Descriptions

Listed below are some of the common hydrangea varieties available. J&L does not have all of these varieties available the entire season. Some varieties may not be available every year.



Hydrangea anomala

Hydrangea anomala 'petiolaris' Climbing hydrangea is very hardy. This hydrangea is a true clinging vine. While initially slow growing, the plant can eventually cover tall (up to 80 feet) structures. White, lacecap type inflorescences are produced in early- to mid-summer. Plants can be slow to start flowering, but patience is rewarded by a spectacular floral display on established plants. An alternative to planting climbing hydrangea on the side of a building is to allow it to climb up a tall tree or to cascade

over a horizontal surface like a rock pile. Climbing hydrangea grows well in shade, but can also tolerate a sunny location. Full to partial sun. Zones 4 to 7



Hydrangea macrophylla

'Endless Summer' An exciting hydrangea that flowers on new wood to extend color throughout the season. Dead head promptly for repeat blooming. Clear-blue, mophead blooms, that may turn pink in alkaline soils, are 8 in. in diameter. Deep green foliage is lush and mildew resistant. It is an excellent, cold hardy addition to any yard. It likes shade or part shade. It is moderate growing, about 3 to 5 ft. tall and wide. Zone 4 to 9.

'Endless Summer - Blushing Bride' Semi-double florets form large, white mopheads that gradually mature to soft pink. Remove spent flowers to have repeat blooms from spring to fall. Cut emerging spring growth back by half to increase the number of blooms. Sturdy shrub 3 to 6 ft. tall and wide. Plant in filtered sun and keep the soil surface moist, but not soggy. Zone 5-9

'Pinky Winky' Large summer flowers bloom reliably every year. Flowers open white and change to pink, with new white flowers appearing on the same panicle as older pink flowers. Distinctive bi-colored panicles. Soil pH does not affect bloom color.. It can grow 6ft to 8ft tall and wide. It will grow in sun or partial sun Good in groupings and mass plantings. Zones 3 - 9

'Limelight' has unique bright chartreuse blooms in mid-summer, late July - early August, that hold bright and refreshing color right into autumn when the blooms change color to a rich deep pink. The autumn display of chartreuse and pink blooms on the same plant is breathtaking! This is an easy to grow plant with reliable flowering and flower color regardless of soil pH. The flower heads are of good size, ranging from 6 to 12 inches and are held upright on the shrub. It grows 6 to 8 feet high and wide with age. It can be easily maintained as a smaller plant, or trained into a small tree. Zone 3 -8

'Venice Raven' The natural dwarf habit of this hydrangea is compact and dense, with far more flowering stems than most others. Venice Raven is an attention-getter with giant fuchsia blooms and fresh, attractive green foliage. It grows 1 to 3 feet high and wide. The flowers open pale pink, then darken to a rich, hard-to-find shade of bright fuchsia. Very showy for cut flowers, and simply covering the plant if left in place. It begins blooming in early summer and continues until autumn, for a huge show of color in a very small space. Zones 5-9.

'Berlin Rabe' offers the strongest growth and largest flower heads yet on dwarf plants. Its rosy-pink blooms are held in large snowballs of brilliant color on plants less than 3 feet high. It is ideal for containers, the front of the shrub border, or other 'tight spaces'. Berlin Rabe is a magnificent shrub, mildew resistant and just 12 to 32 inches high and 3 to 4 feet wide. The clear pink flowers are exceptionally long-lasting as well, turning green with maturity. Zone 5-9

'Vienna Rawi' The natural dwarf habit of this hydrangea is well-branched and dense, with far more flowering stems than most other dwarf varieties. It is small enough for containers or any tight spot. Vienna Rawi grabs the eye with giant pink or blue blooms, each starred with a cream-colored center that gradually matures to solid pink or blue. Just 2 to 3 feet high and wide. The flowers are unusually large in proportion to the size of the plant, which makes them look positively huge! Perfect for cutting for fresh or dried arrangements, held upright (no flopping!) on very strong, thick bloom stems. The blossoms begin in late spring

and continue into summer. Vienna Rawi needs protection from the harsh afternoon sun. It is carefree and easy, never needing a trim, to keep its naturally dwarf form! Zones 5-9.

'Rio' has made hydrangea growing accessible to small gardens, patios and porches, and northern climates (where it may be overwintered in a frost-free location). Rio is a stocky, very well-branched little shrub, reaching just 2 to 3 feet high and wide. And unlike its size, its flowers are full size, each floret starred with a pale green eye and base that shades into blue or purple. As the florets mature, the green recedes. In acidic soils, Rio is one of the most intense and strongest blue Hydrangeas on the market. Rio blooms a bit earlier than many other Hydrangea, starting in earliest summer and continuing all season. The blooms arise on strong stems, refusing to flop. They are great for cutting, and make long-lasting fresh or dried arrangements. The foliage stays handsome even in hot, humid climates, resisting the mildew that plagues many Hydrangea varieties. Zones 5-9.

'Paris' is a dream come true for hydrangea lovers worldwide! It is a compact hydrangea. It produces lovely rose -pink blooms and is ideal even for small gardens! Paris produces its showy, deep pink flowers on a dwarf, 3 ft tall shrub that has a very nice tight and sturdy habit. It never needs to be pruned. Paris holds bloom color well into the fall and is beautiful for use as a cut (fresh or dried) flower. Zone 5-9

'Ayesha' Popular, deciduous shrub prized for its large, rounded clusters of spoon-shaped, mauve-pink flowers in summer. Glossy, heavily textured, deep green leaves compliment blooms. It thrives in protected areas. Ideal as a showy accent plant or group for stunning effect. This is a superb shrub for planting under the filtered light of shade trees. Remove a few old stems each summer to keep the plant renewed. Partial sun. Moderate-growing to 4 to 6 feet tall and wide. Zone 6-9

'Lady in Red' An outstanding lacecap that blooms pinkish white and deepens to burgundy red as florets mature. Unique maroon stems and leaf venation. Autumn color in vivid purple tints for end of the season show. A three season performer for mixed beds and borders. Exceptional for foundations and shaded sites. Perfect for containers. Part shade. Fast growing 3 to 5 feet tall and as wide. Zone 6 to 9

'Lanarth White Lacecap' Spectacular lacecap bloom has a ring of sterile white florets surrounding a large cluster of pink to blue fertile flowers. Broadly rounded form effective in mass plantings or large containers. Partial sun. Fast grower to 3 to 4 feet tall and wide. Cutting grown. Zone 5 to 9

'All Summer Beauty' This prolific flowering compact shrub bears large, ball-shaped clusters of pink and blue shades in neutral soil and rich blue flowers in an acid soil. The green foliage provides a lush back-ground to the opulent blooms. A superb variety for cut flowers in fresh and dried arrangements. Partial shade. Moderate grower to 3 to 5 feet tall and wide. Zone 5-9

'Merrits Beauty' Superb shrub for accent, specimen or border use in semi-shaded areas; desired for the splendid, abundant, globe-shaped showy carmine-red flower clusters. Handsome foliage on boldly branched, mounded form. Partial sun. Fast-growing to 4 to 6 feet high, equal width. Zone 7 to 9

'Minni Penny' Large pink to blue mophead flowers change color with soil acidity. Blooms continuously through the season on a dwarf, compact form. Superior foundation plant under windows. Use in sheltered beds and borders. Small stature is

perfect for containers. Highly disease resistant foliage. Partial sun. Fast growth 2 to 3 feet tall, 3 to 4 feet wide. Zone 6 to 9

'Nikko Blue' Superb shrub for accent, specimen or border use in semi-shaded areas; desired for the splendid, abundant, showy blue globe-shaped flower clusters. Handsome foliage on boldly branched, mounded form. Partial sun. Fast-growing to 4 to 6 ft. tall and wide. Zone 5-9

'Princess Lace' Delicate, white lacecap blooms mature to pink; with a slight blue tinge in acidic soils. The addition of lustrous, dark green foliage makes a beautiful shrub for flowering borders or tucked into a cottage garden. Highly disease resistant foliage. Moderate growing to 4 to 6 ft. tall and wide. Partial sun. Zone 5-9

'Dooley' This charming flowering shrub is nearly smothered in summer blooms. Rich, brilliant blue flower clusters are backed by the lustrous, densely arranged foliage. Plant this one where you can be refreshed by its vibrant color. Thrives in rich, moist, well-drained soil. Partial sun. Vigorous growth to 3 to 5 feet tall and wide. Zone 6-9

'Penny Mac' Large, rounded clusters of deep-blue, mophead flowers bloom repeatedly. Flowers throughout the warm months on new growth for beautiful cut flower arrangements. Lush, dark green leaves ensure good looks all season. Perfect choice for protected foundation plantings and around outdoor living areas. Add to a border for size and interest. Partial sun. Moderate-growing to 4 to 6 ft. tall, 3 to 4 ft. wide. Zone 5-9

'Pink N Pretty' Superb shrub for accent, specimen or border use in semi-shaded areas. Desired for the splendid, abundant, showy, bright pink flower clusters. Handsome foliage on boldly branched, mounded form. Partial sun. Moderate grower to 4 to 6 feet high, 3 to 4 feet wide. Zone 5-9

'Pink Elf' Also known as Pia. Miniature in size, ideal shrub for container, accent or border use in semi-shady areas. Numerous colorful rich pink broad flower heads add long lasting enjoyment. Filtered sun. Fast grower to 18 inches tall and 24 inches wide. Zone 5-11

'Princess Lace' Delicate, white lacecap blooms mature to pink; with a slight blue tinge in acidic soils. The addition of lustrous, dark green foliage makes a beautiful shrub for flowering borders or tucked into a cottage garden. Highly disease resistant foliage. Moderate growing to 4 to 6 ft. tall and wide. Partial sun. Zone 5-9

'Queen of Pearls' Clean, glistening white mophead flowers practically glow above the lustrous dark green leaves. Flowers do not typically show pink as they age. Beautiful in the cottage garden or as a shrub border. Disease resistant foliage. Moderate growing 4 to 6 ft. tall and wide. Partial sun. Zone 6-9

'Red N Pretty' Superb shrub for accent, specimen or border use in semi-shaded areas; desired for the splendid, abundant, showy flower clusters. Handsome foliage on boldly branched, mounded form. Partial sun. Moderate-growing to 4 to 6 feet high, 3 to 4 feet wide. Zone 5-7

'Teller Red' A vivid rose-red Hydrangea that is a stand-out in any shade garden. Large, lacecap flower heads bear vivid carmine outer ring and inside a mixture of smaller pink and pale blue blossoms. Provides long-lasting mid to late summer color. Well-defined deep emerald green leaves cover an upright, spreading plant. Valuable foundation plant or in shrub borders with limited sun. Partial sun. Fast grower to 4 to 6 feet tall and as wide. Zone 6-9

'Variegated Lacecap' Excellent choice for the shrub border or as a garden accent. Spectacular gentian-blue lacecap flower heads when grown in acidic soil. Large green leaves with creamy-white edges. Partial sun. Fast, rounded grower to 4 to 6 feet tall and wide. Zones 5-9

'Glowing Embers' Large rounded clusters of pink blooms cover this upright, rounded shrub from summer through fall. It makes a charming companion to evergreen shrubs in foundation plantings or mass planted under tall trees. Does best in moist but well-drained soils. Prefers shade, except in cool summer regions. Filtered tree shade is ideal. Reaches 6 feet tall and 6 to 8 feet wide. Zones 7-9

'Hornli' Dwarf in size, ideal small shrub for container, accent or border use in semi-shady areas. Numerous colorful bright crimson broad flower heads add long lasting enjoyment. Compact grower 18 to 20 in. tall, 2 ft. wide. Partial sun. Zone 6-9

'Blue Wave' A magnificent cool-blue in less acid soils makes this a wise choice. Large vigorous plants produce lace cap flowers with a sea-blue sterile ring and a violet center of blossoms. In more alkaline soils outer ring is pink or lilac. Long floral display peaks in June. Rounded form is ideal for foundation planting or as high contrast dark green background shrub for perennials. Plant in rich, well drained, evenly moist soil. Part sun. Rapid growth to 6 feet and as wide. Zone 6-9

'Waterfall' Unusual white lacecap blooms have double sepals that cascade over deep, dark tapered leaves giving a wonderful waterfall effect. Excellent for the shade garden, containers or as a border planting. Moderate growing 3 to 5 ft. high and wide. Partial sun. Zone 6-9

'Midnight Duchess' Lustrous dark green foliage densely spaced along purple-black stems provides the perfect framework for the extremely large mauve-pink lacecap flowers maturing to green. A striking specimen for cottage and woodland gardens. Disease resistant foliage. Moderate growing 4 to 6 ft. high and wide. Partial sun. Zone 6-9

Hydrangea Serrata

'Woodlander' Small shrub with soft coloring is excellent for smaller spaces. Produces numerous heads of dainty lacecap flowers in shell pink. Flowers mid to late summer over many weeks until fall. Small-scale leaves takes on a purplish cast in fall for late season variety. Dense growth and rounded habit. Partial sun. Moderate to fast growth to 4 feet tall and wide. Zone 5-9

'Bluebird' Spectacular lacecap bloom has a ring of sea-blue, sterile florets surrounding a large cluster of rich-blue flowers. Flowers attain best blue tint in acid soils. Foliage reddens in fall. Partial sun. Fast grower to 4 to 6 feet tall and wide. Sometimes listed as *H. macrophylla* 'Bluebird'. Zone 6-9

'Beni gaku' A proven ancient Japanese variety with unique lacecap flowers on versatile compact plant. Deep green leaves accented with contrasting red petiole and midrib. Abundant flower heads with crown of florets emerging white, then darken to pink and finally a true blood red without a hint of blue. Startling array of hues on one plant as flowers age. Shade or filtered sun. Rapid growth to 4 feet tall and wide. Zone 5-9

Hydrangea quercifolia

'Vaughn's Lillie' Large and extraordinarily full heads of white flowers practically smother this compact shrub. Superb burgundy-red fall foliage and peeling reddish-brown bark add interest year-round. Zone 5-9

'Snowflake' Lovely, white lacecap 12- to 15-inch flower clusters that appear to be double backed by deeply lobed, oak-like leaves make this a stand out in the garden. An added bonus, foliage turns brilliant crimson in fall. Partial sun. Fast-growing to 4 to 6 feet high, equal width. Zone 5-9

'Alice Oakleaf' It has deeply lobed, oak-like leaves and a profusion of large white blooms. An added bonus, foliage turns brilliant crimson in fall. Partial sun. Prune to shape after flowering; becomes 8 to 10 feet tall and wide. Zone 5-9

'Amethyst' Conical 6-inch long inflorescences are initially white, but quickly age to wine-red. Foliage adds interesting texture to the landscape & turns deep burgundy red in fall. A low maintenance, easy to grow shrub. Ideal as a specimen or accent. Grows 5'-6' tall and wide. Zone 5-9

'Pee Wee' A dwarf, four-season shrub perfect for smaller gardens. White flowers bloom late spring to early summer, fading to pink as they mature. Large oak-like leaves brighten to beautiful fall foliage. It has cinnamon-colored bark in the winter. Superb as a specimen or foundation plant. Fits into smaller gardens, side yards and corners of the shrub border out of direct sun. Moderate growth to 4 feet tall, 3 feet wide. Zone 5-9

'Snow Queen' Large, dense 6 to 8 inch long clusters of white flowers are held upright above the dark green oak leaf shaped foliage. Flowers become rose-pink in fall and leaves turn deep red-bronze. Tan-brown exfoliating bark is attractive in winter. Perfect for shady shrub borders as well as the woodland or cottage garden. Moderate growing to 4 to 5 feet tall, 5 to 6 feet wide. Partial sun. Zone 5-9

Hydrangea paniculata

'Angels Blush' Long-lasting, 10-inch long white flower clusters turn rosy-red in late summer and fall as they age, adding color to the garden when few plants are in bloom. Best used as an accent specimen. Partial sun. Fast-growing to 8 to 12 feet tall, 6 to 10 feet wide. Zone 4-8

'Unique' Gorgeous white blossoms on vigorous, trouble free plants. Early blooming, by mid-July, large flowers mature with a tint of pink. Upright and arching form produces a perfect foundation plant against bare walls, or pruned to tree shape in small gardens. Exceptionally cold hardy and well adapted to difficult conditions. Prune in winter or early spring. Prefers well drained, evenly moist soil. Sun or part shade. Rapid growth to 10 feet and 6 feet wide. Zone 3-8

'Tardiva' Late season flowers extend garden color into November! Lacy white flowers are stunning, and tinted with pale pink as season progresses. Cold hardy shrub for foundation plantings or you can prune it to an open tree form. Prune in winter or early spring. Good cutting flowers. Prefers well drained, evenly moist soil. Sun or part shade. Rapid growth to 10 to 20 feet tall and wide. Zone 3-8

Hydrangea arborescens

'Annabelle' is a stunning white hydrangea, often producing heads over 10" in diameter. Unlike the better known blue and pink hydrangeas (macrophyllas), Annabelle blooms every year even after severe pruning or intensely cold winters. The huge, white "drumstick" blooms appear in profusion without fail.

Some people plant 'Annabelle' as a hedge since it can be cut back severely in the winter for a tidy effect. 'Annabelle' makes a spectacular show in colder regions as well as very warm ones. Grows 3 to 5 feet tall and wide. Zone 3-9.

Definitions

Bract - A leaf-like structure that grows below a flower or cluster of flowers that is often colorful. Colored bracts are often mistaken for petals. Poinsettia is an example of a plant with prominent bracts.

Exfoliating - Peeling off bark, in shreds or in thin layers, from a plant.

Floret - A small or reduced individual flower, especially one of the composite plants, such as a hydrangea, aster, or daisy.

Hybrid - A plant, or group of plants, that results from the interbreeding of two distinct cultivars, varieties, species, or genera.

Inflorescence - is a group, or a cluster of flowers arranged on a stem that is composed of a main branch or a complicated arrangement of branches. A flower cluster.

Lacecap - Lace Cap hydrangeas are large leafed varieties with flat flowers. The flowers are small in the middle and around the outside they have larger, ¾ of an inch size flowers with four petals.

Mophead - Flower heads are large and round, resembling pom-poms.

Panicle - An inflorescence with a main stem and branches, the flowers on the lower branches open earlier than the upper ones. A loosely branched inflorescence.

Petal - One of the outer parts of a flower that is arranged in a circle. It protects the inside parts of a flower. They are the colored part of the flower. It may produce fragrant oils and colors that attract pollinators.

pH - Soil pH is a measure of the soil acidity or Soil alkalinity. An acid soil has a pH value less than 7. An alkaline soil has a pH higher than 7.

Sepal - The outer green parts of the base of the flower. They protect the flower bud before it opens. Inside the sepals are the colored petals.

Genus - A general grouping of plants sharing common traits. It is the first part of the scientific name. The first letter of the name of the genus is always capitalized.

Species - A class of plants having common attributes and designated by a common name. It is the second part of the scientific name. The first letter is not capitalized.

Variety - Members of a species that differ from others of the same species in minor, but heritable characteristics. It is the third part of the scientific name. The first letter is capitalized. It is usually marked by single quotation marks.

Cultivar - The variety of a plant. However, technically there is a difference between cultivar and variety. Cultivar is considered to be a product of intentional breeding whereas Variety is the product of accidental crossing. The terms are commonly used interchangeably. It is part of the scientific name, usually marked by single quotation marks.

Pee Gee Hydrangea

Hydrangea paniculata 'Grandiflora' 'Pee Gee'

genus species variety cultivar



Additional sources for information about Hydrangea Plants

<http://www.americanhydrangeasociety.org/>

<http://www.abouthydrangea.com/index.shtml>

<http://www.hydrangeashydrangeas.com/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydrangea>

<http://www.thegardenhelper.com/hydrangea.htm>

