



## ***Annuals for flower power!***

Annuals are the easiest and fastest way to add some sparkle to a garden. They can be planted just about anywhere -- in window boxes, tubs, pots on patios, perennial borders (to add summer colour), cutflower gardens, to hide dying spring bulb foliage, grow around shrubbery, at the base of trees, in hanging baskets, and just about anywhere else you want them to.

To look their best, annuals do need regular attention through the dry summer months. Most annuals are tropical plants and grow madly through the heat of the summer -- so they need lots of water and plant food. We recommend a water soluble all-purpose fertilizer such as 20-20-20 every two weeks during the growing season.

The selection of annuals is just as diverse as that of trees and shrubs -- you will find something for every possible situation.

Climbing annuals include **morning glory, sweet pea, nasturtium, scarlet runner bean** and **black-eyed Susan**.

For cut flowers choose: **snapdragons, carnations, dahlias, cockscomb, poppies, phlox, zinnias, viola, marigolds**.

Annuals with coloured foliage include: **coleus, artemesia, amaranthus** and **dusty miller**.

Flowers that dry well are: **cockscomb, corn flower, baby's breath, sea lavender, salvia, cone flower**.

To create a low annual hedge use: **artemesia, African marigolds** or **sunflowers**.

For a partially shady location use, **begonia, cockscomb, coleus, impatiens, lobelia, flowering tobacco, phlox** or **pansies**.

In a sunny dry site choose: **ageratum, corn flower, petunia, portulaca, marigolds** or **zinnia**.



When deciding which annuals to buy, think about their height. It sounds obvious, but many gardeners fail to take into account that the taller annuals go at the back of the border or planting, and the shorter annuals should be planted at the front.

## Start with a plan

Professional gardeners mark out an entire bed before beginning to plant their design -- just to make sure they have enough plants to complete the job. We're not suggesting you should put an "X" where each plant goes in your garden, but do think about the effect you want to create before you put your trowel in the ground.



Prepare your bed before you plant. It should be spaded over with the addition of some peat moss or composted manure for organic matter. A sprinkle of granular fertilizer before turning the soil over will provide the roots with some long lasting nutrients.

Once you've brought your plants home, they should be set in the ground as soon as possible. Don't leave them in your dark garage or under the deck for a few days until you can plant them. Make sure the plants are firmed into the soil well and then WATER!

## Keep your annuals going

Once your annuals have established themselves and are blooming, they will need a little maintenance. Dead blooms should be snapped off to encourage the plants to produce more flowers and annuals such as petunias that may get spindly can be trimmed back by a third in mid-summer so they will sprout again.

Annuals complete their growing cycle in one season; that is they germinate, grow, flower, set seed and then die with fall frosts. Annuals planted under eaves, and some hardier types such as geraniums and flowering cabbage, can withstand a frost and will last longer and continue to bloom in the early fall.

