



# Tips for Success with Bulbs

Planting bulbs in fall brings unexpected color and delight starting in early spring.

Take time to select varieties with different flower times to extend the fun!

Use bulbs in formal beds or naturalize them in lawns.

They can also be forced in pots for winter color inside the house.

## Planting

**Looking Good** Bulbs look best planted in groups or drifts unless they are arranged in formal patterns. A single bulb can look lonely in a garden or pot. To arrange an informal grouping, gently (so as not to bruise the bulbs) toss out the bulbs and plant them where they lie. You can use golf balls or ping pong balls for the same effect.

**How to Plant** Ok, this sounds obvious but make sure you plant your bulbs tip up and roots down. This is not always that easy to tell so take time to figure it out. When in doubt, roll the bulb and it will land right side up.

Use tools like a trowel, bulb planter or bulb auger with your electric drill to dig holes. Amend the bottom of each hole with between a teaspoon and a tablespoon of **Bulb Food** or **Bone Meal** depending on the size of the bulb. This provides fertility for long-lasting vigor. Plant bulbs according to the chart at the right. Notice the difference between tip and root-end depth.

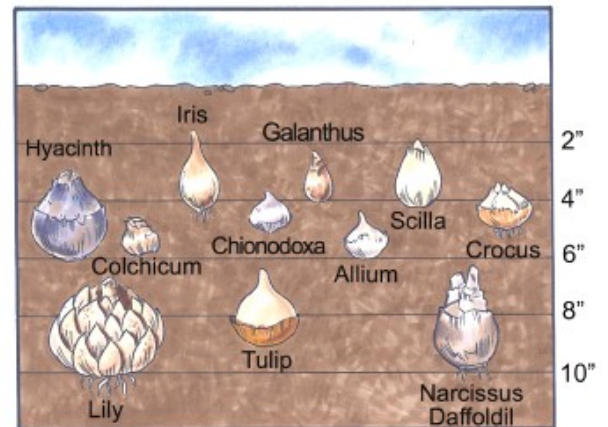
**When to Plant** For Tulips, plant from mid-September until you can no longer move frozen ground. If the soil surface is frozen but you can dig through it, you can still plant tulips.

Other bulbs need time to get rooted in so plant them from mid-September until mid-October.

**Forcing Indoors** All bulbs are good candidates for forcing inside the house. Forcing tips are available on another fact sheet.



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## Easy Solutions to Animal Problems

There are a few easy steps to protect your investment in bulbs if you have problems with animals interfering with your fun.

The good news is that Narcissus, some Hyacinth, Scilla, Crocus, and some Allium are resistant to being eaten as flowers and eaten from underground by gophers. Still, take some precautions.



### If you have problems with critters digging up your bulbs or eating them from under the soil surface

- Don't leave the papery bulb wrappers on the soil surface.
- Soak bulbs for at least 5 minutes in a liquid animal repellent.
- Use a granular animal repellent near the bulb underground and/or on the surface.
- Plant bulbs inside a chicken wire "cage."

### If you have problems with deer and rabbits eating leaves and flowers

Spray foliage and blooms with a liquid animal repellent and consider sprinkling granular animal repellent in the area.

