

Perennials

PERENNIAL PLANTING AND CARE

Planting:

Dig a hole twice as wide and as deep as the root ball. Mix 25-30% compost with the soil you removed from the hole. Take the plant out of the pot (tip the pot upside down and push on the bottom of the pot to loosen the root ball); avoid pulling on the top of the plant to remove it from the pot. Gently tease some of the roots from the ball, or score the root ball 1/4" deep in 3-4 places. Place the plant in the hole and backfill with the soil/compost mix. Tamp lightly. Be sure the top of the root ball is at or slightly above

soil line. Water deeply, then add a root stimulator such as Starter Plus. Apply 2-3" of bark mulch around the plant, keeping it away from the crown.



Watering: Newly planted perennials should be watered deeply 2-3 times per week for 3-4 weeks. Water deeply once a week or as needed throughout the rest of the growing season. After the first year, water deeply as needed.

Deadheading: Most perennials benefit from deadheading (removing spent blooms). When flowers have faded, cut the flower stem back to the next lowest bud or to the leaves at the base of the plant. Exceptions would be biennials (such as Foxglove and Cheiranthus— let some seed develop to provide plants for next year) and plants you want to provide seed for birds such as Echinacea (Coneflower). Deadheading will promote longer bloom time and prevent unwanted seed from developing.

Dividing: Divide perennials to rejuvenate older plants that are producing few flowers, to control fast growing perennials, and to propagate your plants. The best time is when plants are not in flower. Plants that flower in spring and early summer should be divided in early fall; those that flower from mid-summer to fall should be divided in spring.

Dig up the root system and remove loose soil. Some plants can be pulled apart gently with your hands. Others will need to be cut with a saw, pruners, or spade. New plants should be big enough to have at least 3-4 buds or growing points on each. Replant at the same depth as the parent plant was growing.



**DICKMAN
FARMS**

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Dividing: con't

Be sure to mix compost into the soil. Peonies should be planted with the eyes (buds) 1" below soil line.

German Iris can be divided in July or August, after they finish flowering. Dig up the plant and remove the soil. With a sharp knife or spade, cut away the old woody sections from the center of the clump. The remaining pieces can be cut into sections with one or more fans of leaves per piece. Cut the leaves back to about 6". Replant into compost-rich soil, with the top of the rhizome at soil line.

Winter Care: Perennials that have turned brown after frost can be cut back to the ground. Those that are still green can be left alone except for deadheading (unless you want the seed for birds). Grasses can be cut to the ground in late fall or early spring. Wait until spring if you want to enjoy their beauty through winter. Shallow-rooted perennials and those planted late in the season would benefit from a covering of straw or evergreen boughs applied late November or December.

Transplanting: Perennials can be transplanted (without dividing) in spring or fall. Avoid transplanting if the plants will flower soon; wait till the following season. Dig up the plant and move it to its new location, adding compost to the new site.



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HOW TO PLANT YOUR PERENNIALS

Choose the right location— consider the amount of sun (full sun, full shade, part sun, or part shade), the type of soil (clay, sandy, rocky or loose and friable), and the drainage (well drained, wet, or dry). The type of soil and drainage can be changed with soil amendments if necessary.

Dig a hole twice as wide as the root ball, and as deep as the depth of the root ball. Avoid planting too deep. Mix 25-30% compost with the soil you dig out of the hole (Seven Year Gold composted manure, Toad Hollow Compost, Cow Manure or Peat Humus work well). Remove the pot from the plant. (tip the pot upside down and push on the bottom to loosen the root ball. Avoid pulling on the top of the plant. Gently tease some of the roots from the root ball, or score the ball 1/4" deep in 3-4 places. Place the plant in the hole.

Backfill with the soil/compost mix, tamping lightly to remove air pockets. Avoid getting soil in to the crown of the plant. Water deeply, then use a root stimulator such as Schultz Starter Plus. Apply 1qt. of mixed product per 1 gallon perennial; use 1/2 gal. of mixed product per 3 gal. or larger perennial.

Apply 2-3" of bark mulch around the plant, keeping mulch out of the crown. Water deeply 2-3 times a week for 3-4 weeks, checking the soil before watering. Water once a week or as needed after that.



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