

GROWER'S GUIDE ZINNIA



DAYONA FARM FOUNDATION





POLLINATORS

Pollinators are attracted to Zinnias because of their colorful blooms that can be easily spotted from an aerial view. Bees and butterflies prefer to feed on the nectar of these flowers because of their uncomplicated, easy access. Pollinators are most drawn to taller Zinnia varieties with a clear yellow center. One of the main reasons why Zinnias play such an essential role in the pollinator garden, besides their easily accessible nectar, is that they bloom from summer until frost. Deadhead spent flowers as they turned brown to keep your Zinnias blooming. When you deadhead or cut off the brown flowers, it signals the plant to keep blooming and not go to seed. Then, the plant will use the saved energy to produce more flowers.

PROLIFIC BLOOMS



Zinnias are the most prolific and abundant garden flower. They are annuals that bring an explosion of color to any garden bed. Zinnias are the best flower for beginners. They are low maintenance and easy to sow. Their flowers bloom in late spring until the first frost in fall. Butterflies and hummingbirds are attracted to the cheerful blossoms that flower in nearly every bright color imaginable. Besides being gorgeous and easy to grow, zinnias prefer full sun and are heat and drought-tolerant.



SOW WITH CARE



Location

Plant your zinnia seeds in an area that receives at least 6 hours of full sun each day and has well-draining soil. While young plants are getting established, keep the soil moist, but once established, these plants are drought tolerant. Avoid overhead watering. Keep zinnias in well-drained, dry areas for best flowering results. Overwatering or continuous wet conditions can lead to powdery mildew, leaf spots, and rot.



Planting

The simplest method to plant zinnias is to sow them directly into garden beds after the last spring frost. It takes air and soil of more than 70 degrees Fahrenheit to germinate well. Loosen the soil to a depth of 8 inches. Plant the seeds and cover them with 1/4 inch of fine soil. Space as much as your chosen variety needs, anywhere from a couple of inches to a few feet. Give enough space so air can flow around the mature flowers, preventing disease.



LOW MAINTENANCE

Zinnias are fast-growing. After planting, you'll see zinnia seedlings for most varieties in only 4 to 7 days. Blooms will appear in just two months. Since they're fast-growing, they shade out weeds. They don't require fertilizing, and they don't need mulching.

Types of Zinnias

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Zinnia flowers come in three primary sorts: single, semi double, or double. The difference between these flowers comes from the number of rows of petals and if the center of the flower is visible. Single-flowered zinnias have one row of petals and a visible center. Double-flowered zinnias have multiple rows of petals, and their centers are not seen. Semi double-flowered zinnias are somewhere in-between, with numerous rows of petals but visible centers.

Saving Seeds

02

Seeds are easy to save. Let the blooms dry entirely on the stem. Remove seeds by clipping the head and lightly crumbling the flower with your fingers. The dried seeds will easily separate from the flower. Store the seeds in a cool, dry place and plant the following spring. The seeds saved from hybrid plants may not develop identically to the parent plant.

CUTTING FLOWER



Zinnia flowers make bright, cheery floral arrangements. They have an excellent vase life when harvested at the correct time. To guarantee the cut blooms are long-lasting, you want to look for big, beautiful flowers that are not fully open. Before cutting, give the stem a little wiggle between your straight pointer and middle finger. Look for a stiff, sturdy stem. If it wobbles, the flower will immediately wilt. Cut the stem on a diagonal as far down as you can. This will promote the side shoots to grow into new flowers. Blooms will last in a vase at room temperature for 5-7 days in fresh water mixed with floral food. Zinnias pair beautifully in floral arrangements with dahlias, cosmos, giant marigolds, sunflowers, and much more.