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Growing Clematis

Where to plant: Clematis have a deep root system. They prefer cool, rich, damp, (but not soggy) well-drained soil. The foliage and the flowers prefer full to part sun (6 hours or more of direct sunlight) while the roots require shade to keep them cool and moist. Mulch well around the base of your Clematis to prevent the roots from getting too hot or drying out.

Site Preparation: When preparing your planting site we recommend that you loosen your soil to a depth of one to two feet. Mix the loosened soil with 50% peat moss. Place your Clematis in the hole so that the crown (top of the root ball) is positioned just below your soil level. Mulch well and keep it properly watered do not let it dry out, especially the first year as it's getting established. Provide your new plant sturdy support. A trellis or arbor would be a good choice.

Established Care: Once established be sure to thoroughly water your Clematis about once a week during dry, hot periods. Feed your Clematis in spring with a granular time release fertilizer that is well balanced or about every four weeks through the growing season with a well-balanced water soluble fertilizer.

Very Important!!! Cut back your Clematis the first spring after planting to about 10 or 12 inches. This will produce a fuller, bushier plant with heavier flowering over the entire vine.

Pruning Clematis to Maximize Bloom

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All Clematis fall into one of these three groups...

Group 1: Spring blooming varieties require little or no pruning. These plants bloom on old wood. If necessary you can control them if they begin to outgrow their space by pruning after their spring flowers have begun to fade.

Group 2: This group blooms in the spring on the old wood from the previous year and then again during the late summer on the current year's growth. All dead and weak stems should be pruned out in late spring. Work from the top down to avoid cutting off more than is necessary. If something more is needed to maintain good shape and habit, we recommend that it be done immediately after the early spring flowers have begun to fade. With these varieties it is beneficial to dead head (remove spent blossoms) after the initial bloom to stimulate the second late summer bloom.

Group 3: Summer blooming varieties will flower on the current year's growth. Cut these plants back every year in very early spring to the lowest set of buds. This will promote vigorous new growth which is what these plants produce their flowers on.