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How To Divide Perennials

By Lee Dobbins

Perennials are a favorite type of garden plant for many gardens as they will bloom for several seasons without replanting. Perhaps one of the best qualities of perennials is that you can divide them and make more plants for free! Dividing your perennials periodically is important as it will keep them from getting overcrowded and help insure healthy lush plants.

Many perennials can be divided easily, but this does not hold true for every variety. In general, division is easiest with perennials that grow in clumps or ones with an expanding root mass. Perennials which stem from single taproot typically cannot be divided but can be duplicated by using root cuttings or seeds.

It is important to divide the plant at a time when the plant is most likely to be receptive to this procedure. For plants that come up in spring and summer, the best time to divide them is in the fall. Perennials that bloom in the fall or late summer should be divided in the spring.

You can divide perennials with a minimum of preparation. If you will be replanting the divisions, you should have already decided on the new area and prepared the soil to accept the new plants. If you are dividing to give the plants to a family member or friend, have an appropriate receptacle handy to put the division in.

Loosen the soil, gently, around the plant clump that you plan to divide. You can use a spading fork to scrape up the dirt and be sure not to damage any parts of the plant. The clump should then be sliced with a garden trowel and divided into four parts. Make sure your trowel is sharp so you get a clean cut, otherwise your plants could become damaged. Break up the four sections by hand into four inch by four inch sections. Plant the small sections immediately.

When you are dividing plants, make sure you thoroughly wet the soil a couple of days before you do the division. This will make it easier to dig up the clump for division. Also, you should add compost or some other organic material to the soil both around the original plant and in the soil where the new divisions will be planted. This will give the plants the nutrition they need and help them to grow strong in their new area of the garden. Once the new plants are in place, make sure you water thoroughly and fertilize appropriately.

How To Divide Perennials

Planning your perennial plantings and divisions can help you grow your garden without having to spend extra money. All it takes is a little bit of time and patience and you can have a large full garden on even a small budget!

Lee Dobbins writes for

Backyard Garden And Patio

where you can get more great gardening and

landscaping tips.

How To Use Biennials & Perennials In Landscaping Your Garden

By Paul Curran

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Biennials

Biennials are generally very beautiful plants, with most attractive flowers. They are somewhat more trouble for the gardener, since they keep growing during their first year and do not bloom until the second. Their great advantage is that their seeding stage produces new plants which will bloom again two years later, making it unnecessary to plant additional seeds.

The biennials are usually planted in early summer and transplanted to good soil when they are large enough to handle. It is a good idea to pot them at this time, particularly in areas where plants cannot be left outdoors all winter. In some cases, they can be transplanted to a coldframe, and then placed in the flower bed the following spring. The requirements of careful soil preparation apply to biennials as well as annuals.

After planting, if you want a continuous new growth of plants, it is best not to weed and cultivate too assiduously. If a really fastidious biennial patch is planted, it will be necessary to replace the plants with new ones each year.

Perennials

Perennials are the basic flowers of any garden. Each year they die and renew themselves for the next growing season.

How To Divide Perennials

They are long-lived and last for many seasons. Perennials are also, historically, among our oldest plants. They have been cultivated for centuries and often, as a result of breeding and crossbreeding, bear no resemblance to their wild forebears. In some of the perennials, the blossoms have become so specialized through centuries of cultivation that they no longer grow 'seeds.

Other perennials are continually being developed by amateur botanists and gardeners. As a result of this cultivation and inbreeding, perennials as a rule are not as hardy as other varieties. Another disadvantage is the tendency of certain perennials to die down after flowering, thereby leaving gaps in the garden.

There are a number of ways to solve the problems of short-flowering periods and the resultant unsightly spaces. One way is to intersperse perennials with annuals and other bulbs and flowering plants whose bloom occurs either later or earlier than that of the perennials. Some perennials are easy to transplant: chrysanthemums, for example, can be moved from one place to another with no noticeable effect on their vigor.

This is another way to keep color and bloom throughout the growing season. A garden of perennials, either by themselves or mixed with annuals and other bulbs, should be placed along a path, or as a border, with a background of trees, shrubs, a wall or fence.

The background shows the brilliant coloring to best advantage. Some varieties can flourish in the shade, such as anemone, lily of the valley, day lilies, sweet pea, primrose, hollyhock, harebell and peonies, but these flowers must be chosen carefully and faced so that some sun reaches them every day.

Paul Curran is CEO of Cuzcom Internet Publishing Group and webmaster at Trees-and-Bushes.com, providing access to their nursery supplier of a range of quality plants, trees, bushes, shrubs, seeds and garden products.

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