

Designing and Planting Your Perennial Garden

Discover the delights of a perennial garden. Perennials are relatively easy to grow, last from year to year and offer an abundance of shapes, colors and textures.

Location: Is your desired area sunny, shady, dry, wet or rocky? The best garden location is relatively level, has good drainage, reasonably rich soil, protection from strong winds and some sun.

Design: Do you desire a formal garden with neat, geometric shaped beds or do you prefer an informal bed or border with soft, curving edges? Will your garden be seen from all side or will it have a background of some sort, i.e. a fence or wall?

Plant Selection: Your choices should be based on location and design. Some points to consider are:

- Height
- Spread of mature plants
- Color
- Texture
- Flowering time
- Foliage of plant

Taller plants should be placed in the back of a border with the shortest plants in the front. In a stand alone bed, taller plants could go in the center with the shorter plants around the edges. Be sure to choose plants with the right light and soil requirements for the area you have selected.

Bed Preparation: Whether you are planting in an established bed or creating a whole new bed, you will need to determine the texture and structure of your soil. Dig up the soil a bit; take a handful of soil, squeeze it in your palm and then open your hand.

- Clay soil will sit in your hand in a big lump.
- Sandy soil will not stick together.
- If the soil holds together for a few seconds and then crumbles apart, it is good soil.

If you have clay or sandy soil, you should amend it with plenty of organic matter such as Sweet Peet, peat moss, or Garden Magic Composted Manure.

To determine the shape and size of your bed, outline the area with a garden hose and find a shape that pleases you. Use the outline as a pattern when you are ready to dig.

- New beds need to be stripped of sod first. To prevent recurring grass, spray the area with Roundup; wait one to two weeks and then strip dead sod.
- Next, spread your amendments on the bed, add a fertilizer such as Espoma Plant Tone.
- Dig and turn the soil to a depth of 6-10" Break up large clumps of soil and rake out weeds and rocks and you're ready to plant.

Planting Your Perennials: Set your potted perennials out on the bed to determine position. Plant in groups, clumps or drifts and use odd numbers of plants— 3, 5, and 7 are popular. Be sure to check the height and spread of the mature plant. Dig a large enough hole so you can spread the roots. Place where the roots meet the stem at ground level. Pack soil in gently. Water in thoroughly and label if desired. Mulch the bed 2" deep or treat the bed with Preen then mulch. This step is worth every penny if you don't want to spend time weeding. Water regular until plants are established.

Maintenance: Deadhead flowers regularly to extend their bloom time. Fertilize in spring and fall with Plant Tone. Water well and let the soil dry out between watering.

Plants for Your Perennial Garden

Plants for Sunny, Dry Areas

Yarrow Achillea
Golden Marguerite Anthemis tinctoria
Sea Thrift Armeria maritima
Silver Mound Artemisia
Butterfly Flower Asclepias tuberosa
False Indigo Baptisia australis
Coreopsis
Threadleaf Coreopsis Coreopsis verticillata
Globe Thistle Echinops ritro
Spurge Euphorbia
Blanket Flower Gaillardia grandiflora
Daylily Hemerocallis
Lavender Lavandula
Russian Sage Perovskia
Stonecrop Sedum
Hens and Chicks Sempervivum
Lamb's Ears Stachys Byzantina
Cranesbill Geranium
Sedum varieties

Plants for Moist to Wet Areas

Astilbe
Snakeroot, Bugbane Cimicifuga
Bleeding Heat Dicentra
Japanese Iris Iris ensata
Cardinal Flower Lobelia cardinalis
Purple Loosestrife Lythrum salicaria
Ostrich Fern Matteuccia pensylvanica
Spiderwort Tradescantia
Globeflower Trollius eurapeus

Plants for Full Shade

Bungleweed Ajuga
Lily of the Valley Convallaria
Sweet Woodruff Gallium odoratum
Lily's Turf Liriope
Lenten Rose Helleborus
Hosta
Deadnettle Lamium
Virginia Bluebells Mertensia
Solomon's Seal Polygonatum
Lungwort Pulmonaria
Monkshood Aconitum
Spiderwort Tradescantia
Violas

Plants for Partial Shade

Lady's Mantle Alchemilla mollis
Japanese Anemone Anemone x hybrida
Astilbe
Columbine Aquilegia
Brunnera macrophylla
Plumbago Ceratostigma plumbaginoides
Bleeding Heart Dicentra
Leopard's Bane Doronicum cordatum
Coral Bells Heuchera sanguinea
Forget Me Not Myosotis sylvatica
Japanese Forest Grass Hakonechloa

Plants to Attract Butterflies

Yarrow Achillea
Butterfly Flower Asclepias tuberosa
Blanket Flower Gaillardia x grand.
Echineacea pur. Purple Coneflower
Threadleaf Coreopsis Coreopsis verticillata
Globe Thistle Echinops ritro
Lavender Lavandula
Russian Sage Perovskia
Stonecrop Sedum 'Autumn Joy'
Gayfeather Liatris
Cardinal Flower Lobelia cardinalis
Purple Loosestrife Lythrum salicaria
Beebalm Monarda
Summer Phlox Phlox paniculata
Black-Eye Susan Rudbeckia

Plants to Attract Hummingbirds

Hollyhock Alcea rosea
Columbine Aquilegia
Bleeding Heart Dicentra
Cardinal Flower Lobelia cardinalis
Beebalm Monarda
Daylily Hemerocallis
Lavender Lavandula
Coral Bells Heuchera sanguinea
Foxglove Digitalis species
Pinks Dianthus species

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