



# J&L Garden Center

The All Season Gift  
and Garden Center

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[www.JLGardenCenter.com](http://www.JLGardenCenter.com)

## Growing Lilies



Lilies are not just a little dainty flower to hide in your flower gardens: they grab your attention with **big** blossoms and **bold** colors on top of **tall** stems. They demand the center of attention. Lily blossoms can last for two or more weeks, and the plants will come back year after year - up to 20 years in some cases. Lilies don't just catch your eye either, they will tickle your nose with the cleanest, lightest floral scent you can imagine. Lilies can multiply rapidly, survive with minimal care, and live through the coldest winters.

### Blooming Seasons

Hortus III, the official botanical reference guide, lists more than 140 different species in the Lily family. From these 140 species come more than 500 different varieties to choose from. The lily family is divided into several major groups. Four of the most popular groups are: Martagons, Asiatics, Aurelians, and Orientals (listed in the order of their blooming season).



**Martagon lilies** are very cold hardy. They are the first lily to bloom in the spring. They usually have the "Turk's Cap" shaped flowers. The flower petals turn backward towards the stem and they hang down from the stem. Martagon lilies can reach a height of 5' to 6' tall. Martagon lilies are very hardy but they do not like to be moved. After you plant them, leave them alone.



**Asiatic lilies** bloom a little later in the spring than the Martagon lilies. This group of lilies are the easiest to grow and the most resilient. They are available in all colors and shapes. The flowers may open upright, straight out, or droop down. Most Asiatic lilies are not fragrant. Enchantment and Connecticut King are two of the most popular varieties in this group.



**Aurelian lilies** bloom next, after the Asiatic lilies (some Aurelian lilies may start blooming before the latest blooming Asiatic lilies are finished). Most aurelian lilies are trumpet-shaped lilies, but a few have a more open, flared appearance. Aurelian lilies do not produce as many flowers as Asiatic or Martagon lilies, but their flowers are the largest of the lilies. Aurelian lilies are very fragrant and sometimes even become more fragrant after dark. These lilies are pollinated by moths and the strong night fragrance is used to attract the nocturnal moth species. Easter lilies are the most



known of the Aurelian lily group.

**Oriental lilies** begin to bloom just as summer reaches its peak in late-July or early-August. These lilies grow tall and can reach a height of 6' tall. The flowers are generally open-faced or slightly reflexed, but not as pronounced as the "Turk's cap". Star Gazer and Casablanca are the most popular oriental lilies. Most oriental lilies don't last more than 3 or 4 years in the gardens, they don't seem to tolerate as much "extra soil moisture" as the other varieties can.



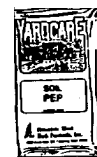
### Planting Lilies

Lilies will grow in almost any climate. **Lilies hate wet feet**, so find a spot in the garden that is well-drained. If your soil is wet, especially if you have heavy clay soil, you will need to grow your lilies in raised bed gardens, rich in organic matter.



Choose healthy, plump bulbs with fat looking roots. Healthy bulbs should not be covered with mold. The usual notion "Bigger is Better" is not necessarily true for lily bulbs. A 1.5" bulb is usually a good size to plant. Larger, 3" bulbs, are usually older bulbs and do not always transplant well.

Mix 2 inches of **Soil Pep** or **Nutri-mulch** in the top 8 inches of garden soil before planting your lily bulbs. Martagon lilies prefer a slightly alkaline soil. Oriental lilies prefer a slightly acid soil. Asiatic and Aurelian lilies really don't care what the ph of the soil is, within reason.



Plant lily bulbs twice as deep as the diameter of the bulb. A bulb 3" in diameter should be planted 6" deep. Plant lily bulbs either in the fall or the spring. (Martagon lilies must be planted in the fall).

**Fall planting:** Be sure to plant the bulbs early enough in the fall that the bulbs have a chance to naturalize before the severe cold freezes the soil. **Spring planting:** Wait until the ground has dried enough that you can work the soil comfortably before planting.



Lilies will start producing flowers the first year they are planted but you will notice more and more flowers as the bulbs establish themselves in the garden. The flowers will also get larger and the plants will grow taller as your lily bulbs get older.



## Fertilizing Lilies

Fertilize lily bulbs soon after the stems start to emerge in the spring. Spread about one cup of **6-10-4 Vegetable and Flower Fertilizer** per 100 square feet of garden. Fertilize them again as soon as they finish blooming. Cut off the spent flowers as soon as they fade.



You do not want the plant to try to produce seeds; you want the plant to feed the bulb for next year's growth. Do not remove the leaves or stems until all the leaves have turned yellow and died. Just like tulips and daffodils, lily bulbs must receive nutrients from the leaves necessary to produce the sugars needed for growth and flower production next year. If the leaves are removed too soon, the bulbs will not have enough energy to produce flowers and the bulbs may actually die.

Lily bulbs like to remain undisturbed for years and years. They do not need to be divided and moved unless they become very over-crowded. If you do need to move or transplant your lilies, the best time to do it is in the fall, after the stalks have matured and turned brown. You will notice that there will not be as many flowers on your plants, and that your flowers will be smaller for two to three years after you move your bulbs. Select the larger bulbs for replanting and plant the small bulbs in rows to grow 2 or 3 years, when they too can be transplanted into the garden.

## Water and Light

All lilies grow well in full sun to partial shade: they like to have their heads in the sun and their roots in the shade. The hotter the weather, the quicker the flowers fade, so a light shade during the middle of the summer will help the blossoms stay prettier longer. Some of the very light, pastel colors will burn very quickly in the bright summer sun.



While lilies require well-drained soil, they also need a fair amount of moisture, especially while they are in bloom. Most lilies will grow nicely with about 1" of water per week. A layer of **Soil Pep** or bark mulch on top of the soil will help reduce the amount of water needed, and it will also help cool the soil, which will help the blossoms bloom longer.

## Staking

Tall, large flowered lilies (particularly Orientals and Aurelians) may get a bit top heavy by the time they bloom. One stake per lily is the best way to stake them up. Be very

careful placing the stake. Do not nick the bulb or damage the roots. You may want to put a small stake next to the bulb soon after planting and then replace the small stake with a large one as the plant grows. Replace the large stake with a small one after the stalks begin to die back. This way you will always know where your lily bulb is planted. Another way to stake lily bulbs is to put a **Grow Ring** over the plant as it begins to grow in the spring. The plant can grow right through one of the slots in the ring, making it an easy way to stake your plants.



## Pests

Virus or mosaic infections are two common problems in lilies. Unfortunately there is no cure for these problems so you must remove and destroy any affected plants to prevent further spread.

Botrytis is a disease common to lilies. Treat this disease with captan, consan, or any of the fungicides used for most flower diseases. Planting lilies in well-drained soil and furrow irrigating, not sprinkling the leaves, are the best ways to prevent this disease.

Aphids are a common insect in lilies. Spray malathion, diazinon, or orthene to kill these pests. Insecticidal soap, Lady bugs and preying mantids are organic ways to control many insects in the lily garden.

Gophers, mice and rodents. Unfortunately these critters love to eat lily bulbs, The only way to control these pests is to actually get rid of them. Poisons or traps are the best way to get rid of rodents.

## Forcing Lilies

Asiatic and Aurelian lilies are easy to force in pots indoors, flowering about eight to ten weeks after you pot them up. Almost any variety will work but the dwarf varieties are the easiest to take of in pots.



Chill the bulbs in the refrigerator for at least eight weeks. Place each pre-chilled bulb in its own 6 inch pot that has good drainage holes. Plant the bulbs with **Black Gold All Purpose Potting Soil**. Do not use garden soil in small pots.

Place the pot where it will receive strong light, either natural sunlight or fluorescent light. Keep the temperature at least 55 F at night and 60 F during the day.

Water regularly after growth begins. Fertilize your pot with one tablespoon of **Osmocote** time release fertilizer. Fertilize every three or four weeks with **Schultz All Purpose Plant Food** after the stalk reaches six inches tall.

**You will have a pot of flowering Lilies in about eight to ten weeks.**

