



Flowers For a Cutting Garden

Siting a Cut Flower Garden -

Plants for a cutting garden can be sited informally as a part of a general garden design, or set aside in a area specifically for a cutting garden. A separate growing area has certain advantages: it gives you a place to try new plants or experiment with color schemes, or a place to put plants whose foliage becomes unattractive or out of place in a garden design. Many plants that produce flowers good for cutting prefer well-drained soil. If your soil is heavy clay, consider planting in berms or raised beds. Site the beds where strong breezes won't buffet flowers or plant/construct a windbreak. If deer are a problem, it may be necessary to fence the area with an 8' fence, or spray with repellents. Planting in blocks provides easier access to flowers. Mulch beds heavily to keep weeds down. When planning, arrange plants culturally (sun plants in sun, shade plants in shade, etc.)



When and How to Cut -

Cut early in the morning (best) or just before sunset placing flowers immediately into a clean holding bucket or container filled with tepid to warm water. Bring cut flowers inside as soon as possible. Once inside, prepare a clean vase or holding container filled with warm water that has floral preservative mixed into it. Strip off any leaves from the flower stems that would otherwise sit in the vase water. Re-cut flower stems at an angle under warm running water using bypass pruners or a sharp knife and place immediately into the vase/container. Some flower stems need to be sealed by dipping briefly in boiling water. See individual entries below.

Keeping Cut Flowers Fresh -

Containers or vases should be cleaned beforehand with antibacterial soap and hot water. Keep flowers in a cool location out of direct sunlight. Be sure leaves are not sitting and rotting in vase water. Many flowers are sensitive to ethylene gas and should therefore be kept away from fruit and gas stoves. Store arrangements in the fridge overnight. As long as lettuce doesn't freeze in your fridge, it shouldn't be too cold for flowers. Exceptions include tropical plants, zinnias, and monkshood. Floral preservative added to vase water will keep flowers fresh longer by feeding them and keeping vase water free of stem-clogging bacteria. Replace water if it starts to look stale and cloudy, and re-cut the flower stems before putting them back in the fresh water.

Flowers That Last For Up to Two Weeks (if put in clean vases and kept in fresh water!)

Aster (*Aster spp.*) - Flowers last 14-18 days. Small white, purple, or smoky lavender daisy flowers in late summer to fall. Plant in full sun. Grow to 2'-5' depending on species/cultivar.

Dianthus - CARNATION (*D. caryophyllus*). Flowers last 7-21 days. Grows to 1'- 4'. SWEET WILLIAM (*D. barbatus*). Flowers last 7-10 days. Grow to 10" - 20". Plant both in full sun in a light, fast draining soil. Cut when flowers are starting to open.

Hosta spp. - Gorgeous foliage in a fantastic array of variations & variegations including blue, chartreuse, and dark green many with lighter or darker centers or edges. Great foliage filler that lasts up to two weeks in the vase. Plant in light to full shade. White or lavender tubular summer flowers are not good as cut flowers. Grows from 3"-3 1/2' depending on cultivar/species.

Gladiolus spp. - Flowers last 10-16 days. Cut when all buds on a spike show color. Spikes of flared, funnel shaped summer flowers in nearly every color except blue. Plant corms in full sun in rich, sandy soil. Grow to 3' - 5'.

Lily (*Lilium spp.*) - Flowers last 8-15 days. Handle cut flowers carefully, remove white section of the stem. Flared trumpet-shaped flowers in many colors and color mixtures, generally in spring or summer. Plant in deep, loose, rich, well-drained soil. Best when roots are shaded and tops are in sun to filtered sun. Mulch well and never let root zone dry out. Good container plants. Asiatic hybrids are easiest to grow for average gardens. Grows to 1 1/2' - 4 1/2'.

Lily-of-the-Nile (*Agapanthus spp.*) - Flowers last 10-20 days. Cut when 1/3 of the flowers on the cluster have opened. Re-cut stems frequently. Rounded clusters of trumpet-shaped purple-blue or white summer flowers. Plant in full sun to light shade. Height varies: 11/2'-5'. Seedheads suitable for drying.

Lisianthus (aka *Eustoma grandiflorum*) - Flowers last 7-20 days. Remove wilted flowers. Re-cut stems frequently. Pretty tulip-like flowers in purple, lavender, pink, white, and picotee types in summer. Plant in full sun to filtered light in good garden soil.

Ornamental Onion (*Alium spp.*) - Flowers last 12-30 days and are suitable for drying. Cut when 1/3 of the flowers on the cluster have opened. Spherical clusters of tiny purple, pink, blue, or white summer flowers. Plant in transplants in spring or bulbs in fall in full sun to light shade.

Peruvian Lily (*Alstroemeria psittacina*) - Flowers last about 14 days if kept in cool temperatures. Pink, white, orange, lilac, yellow, or red lily-like flowers in spring and fall often bi-colored, streaked, striped, or marbled. Plant in full morning sun with afternoon shade in a cool, moist, light loam.

Shasta Daisy (*Leucanthemum maximum*) - Flowers last 7-14 days. Cut when flowers are fully open. Single or double white daisy flowers. Plant in full sun. Grows to 1'-4' depending on cultivar.

Yarrow (*Achillea spp.*) - Flowers last 7-14 days. Flat-topped clusters of yellow, white, pink, red, cream, and terra-cotta colored flowers over a long season in summer. Plant in full sun. Grows to 2'-4' depending on cultivar/species.

Other Good Cut Flowers

Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*) - Flowers last 6-8 days. Cut when flowers are fully open. Bright orange-yellow daisy flowers sometimes with reddish centers. Plant in full sun to part shade. Grows to 3'.

Blazing Star/Gayfeather (*Liatris spicata*) - Flowers last 10-14 days. Dense feathery spikes of flowers in rose-purple or white. Plant in full sun. Suitable for drying. Grows to 2 1/2' - 4'.

Bluebell (*Scilla*) - Flowers last 7-10 days. Early spring perennial bulb blooms with small spikes of blue bell-shaped flowers. Grows well in pots. Plant bulbs 2"-3" deep and 4" apart in full sun to light shade in November.

Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) - Flowers last about 7 days. Broad umbels of glowing orange flowers in summer. Plant in full sun. Cut flowers are prone to wilting if left out of water for any length of time. Cut off fading flowers. Grows to 2'-3'.

Cockscomb (*Celosia argentea* 'Plumosa') - Flowers last 6-10 days. Annual plant sports summer plumes of brilliant pink, gold, red, and orange-red flowers. Plant in full sun. Grows 1'-3' depending on variety. Very good for drying.

Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) - Rosy-pink or white daisy flowers with slightly reflexed petals and a prominent orange-brown central cone. Long bloom season. Plant in full sun. Grows 3'-5'.

Coral Bells (*Heuchera spp.*) - In summer, dainty spikes of nodding bell-shaped flowers in coral, pink, or white with burgundy calyx. Plant in light shade. Foliage grows to 1', flowers to 2'.

Cornflower/Bachelor's Button (*Centaurea cyanus*) - Flowers last 5-7 days. Bright blue, pink, mauve, or white thistle-like summer flowers. Plant seeds in late summer or fall in full sun or buy transplants. Good dried flower. Grows 1'-2 1/2'.

Coreopsis spp. - Flowers last about 7 days. Cut when flowers are fully developed. Golden daisylike flowers bloom freely all summer on mounding plants. Plant in full sun and lightly shear after bloom to encourage more flowers. Grows to 1'-3'.

Cosmos - Flowers last 4-9 days. Cut flowers are particularly sensitive to drafts, heat, and direct sunshine. Bright and showy summer bloomer most often seen with bright pink, crimson, white-and-rose, or white daisylike flowers (annual, *C. bipinnatus*) and in golden yellow (annual, *C. sulphureus*). Grows to 3'-6' depending on variety. Plant in full sun in well-drained soil.

Crocasmia spp. - Flowers last 7-10 days. Cut when buds have started to show color but haven't opened. Orange, red, and yellow freesia-like flowers in summer over strappy foliage. Plant in full sun. Grows to 3'-4'. Drought tolerant.

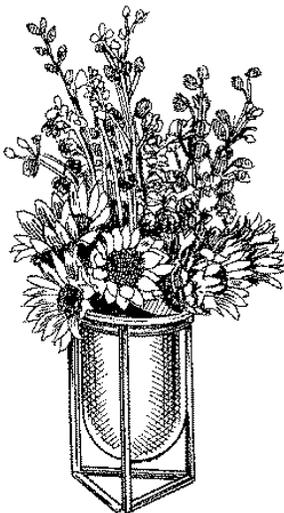
Daffodil, Narcissus (*Narcissus spp.*) - Flowers last about 5 days. Early to late spring blooms in white, yellow, cream, sometimes with a darker colored, pink, peach, yellow, or orange coronas. Sap is harmful to other cut flowers so keep in a separate vase with cut flower food. Plant as a bulb in November.

Dahlia (*Dahlia* hybrids) - Flowers last about 6 days and are suitable for drying. Extend vase life by spraying with water. Pretty summer flowers in many forms and colors, wonderful in the perennial border. Plant in sun with afternoon shade. Grows to 15"-6' depending on hybrid.

Forget-Me-Not (*Myosotis spp.*) - Flowers last 7-10 days. Dainty, loose clusters of small sky-blue flowers in spring. Plant in part sun to light shade.

Foxglove (*Digitalis spp.*) - Flowers last 7-10 days. Lovely spires of bell-shaped, tubular pink, white, or yellow flowers in spring and summer. Plant in light shade in a rich soil. Cutting the main spike will encourage side shoots to bloom.

Gerbera Daisy (*Gerbera jamesonii*) - Flowers last 5-10 days. Keep vase water clean to avoid bacteria-induced wilt. Slit bottom inch of stem before putting in water. Elegant pink, red, orange, salmon, yellow, or white daisy flowers borne on slightly fuzzy leafless stems mainly in early summer and again in late fall. Plant in full sun to part shade. Must have well-drained soil.



Globe Amaranth (*Gomphrena spp.*) - Flowers last 7-12 days and are excellent for drying. Rounded clover-like pink, white, red, lavender, or purple flowers in summer and fall. Plant in

Goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*) - Flowers last 7-10 days and are suitable for drying. Closely packed clusters of small golden flowers in feathery, horizontally spreading sprays. Plant in full sun to light shade. Grows to 2'-7' depending on species/cultivar.

Helenium spp. - Flowers last 8-10 days. Daisy flowers in coppery red and/or yellow with prominent central disk and irregular petals from midsummer to early fall. Plant in full sun in well-drained soil. Do not fertilize heavily.

Hyacinth (*Hyacinthus spp.*) - Flowers last 7-14 days. Fat, fragrant spikes of densely clustered spring flowers in violet, blue, pink, cream, crimson, and white. Plant bulbs in full sun to part shade in October or November.

Hydrangea (*Hydrangea spp.*) - Flowers last 5-10 days and are suitable for drying. Cut when flowerheads are mature. Deciduous shrub with large lacecap, mophead, or pyramidal clusters in pink, blue, or white. Plant in part sun in rich, well-drained soil. For French/Garden Hydrangeas (*H. macrophylla*) add Holly-tone™ to soil for blue flowers or superphosphate for pink.

Lavender (*Lavandula spp.*) - Flowers last 8-10 days and are suitable for drying. Slender spikes of fragrant lavender-purple summer flowers sometimes also in pink or white. Plant in full sun in a lean, well-drained soil with little to no fertilizer.

Lenten Rose/Christmas Rose (*Helleborus spp.*) - Flowers last 5-7 days. Dip ends of cut flowers in boiling water and then place in cold water. Can irritate; wash hands after handling. Single flowers resembling small wild roses in white, green, or cream often marked with burgundy or pink and daintily speckled. Plant in part to full shade in good garden soil. Grows to 1 1/2'.

Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*) - Flowers last 7-10 days. Closely set snapdragon-like pink or white flowers in midsummer to fall. Flower spikes can be bent slightly and will stay in position. Grows to 2' - 4' or more.

Peony (*Paeonia spp.*) - Flowers last 5-10 days. Cut when buds are showing strong color but are not yet open. Herbaceous shrub with lush, bowl shaped fragrant spring flowers blooming in pink, white, or red. Plant in sun with afternoon shade in well-worked, rich, well-drained soil.

Pincushion Flower (*Scabiosa spp.*) - Flowers last 5-10 days. Rounded pale pink, lavender, light yellow, or white flowers resembling pincushions bloom from early summer to frost. Plant in full sun to part shade. Grows to 11/2'-21/2'.

Phlox (*Phlox spp.*) Flowers last 5-10 days. Form varies but upright varieties bear clusters of flowers, some fragrant, in summer. Colors: pale blue, pink, white, pale violet, purple. Grows 1' - 5' depending on species/cultivar. Plant in full sun. To 3' - 5'.

Red Hot Poker (*Kniphofia spp.*) - Flowers last 7-10 days. Spikes of small tubular spring or summer flowers in yellow, orange, red, and sometimes pink. Plant in full sun to light shade. Requires excellent drainage. Grows 2' - 6'.

Rose (*Rosa spp.*) - Flowers last 8-18 days and are suitable for drying. Keep vase water fresh and mixed with flower food. Do not remove thorns. Beautiful flowers in a multitude of forms and colors, many fragrant. Make clean, slanting cuts just above outward facing leaves with 5 or 7 leaflets. Plant in full sun in rich, well-drained soil.

Sedum (*Sedum spectabile, S. telephium*) - Flowers last about 10 days. Dense, rounded clusters of tiny pink, bronzy red, yellow, and white flowers emerge in summer to mature in late summer to autumn. Plant in full sun. Grows to 11/2'.

Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum hybrids*) - Flowers last 8-12 days; re-cut stems to lengthen vase life. Annual plant with spikes of lobed red, yellow, pink, white, or orange flowers in spring to early summer. Plant in sun. Grows to 6"-3'.

Sunflower (*Helianthus spp.*) - Flowers last 6-10 days and are suitable for drying. Bold yellow or dark copper daisy flowers with large brown or maroon centers in late summer and fall. Plant in full sun. Grows to 2'-6' depending on species/cultivar.

Tulip (*Tulipa hybrids*) - Flowers last 5-10 days. Popular bulb flowers vary in form, character, and color. Bloom times ranges from March to May. Plant bulbs 3 times as deep as they are wide, 4"-8" apart in November in full sun.

Veronica/Spike Speedwell (*Veronica spicata*) - Flowers last 5-8 days. Pretty spikes of purple, pink, and white summer flowers. Plant in full sun in well-drained soil. Grows to 2'.

Windflower (*Anemone coronaria*) - Flowers last about 7 days. Cut when petals have started to open. Poppy-like spring flowers bloom in red, purple, pink, and white. Plant in full sun to part shade. Grows to 6"-18".

Zinnia (*Zinnia hybrids*) - Flowers last 6-10 days. Cut when flowers are fully open. Double-flowered, cactus-flowered, or crested flowered annuals bloom in summer in bright shades of orange, yellow, pink, purple, salmon, green, and white. Plant in full sun. Grows 1' - 3'.

