



ALMANAC

Thursday, May 1, 2025



ORDER YOUR ALMANAC TODAY!

HOME > GARDENING > GROWING GUIDES

How to Grow Trailing Lobelia: The Complete Lobelia Flower Guide



Bo *Lobelia*
ta *erinus*
ni *var.*
cal *pen-*
Na *dula*
m
e:

FREE GUIDE!



t
Ty
pe
:

Su [Part](#)
n [Sun](#)
Ex
po
su
re:

So [Slightly](#)
il [Acidic](#)
pH [to](#)
: [Neutral](#)

Bl [Spring](#)
oo , [Fall](#)
m
Ti
m
e:

Fl [Blue](#) ,
ow [Pink](#) ,
er [Purple](#)
Co , [Red](#) ,
lor [White](#)
:

Ha [9](#) , [10](#) ,
rdi [11](#)

ne
:

Sp [Attract](#)
eci [s](#)
al [Butterfl](#)
Fe [ies](#)
at
ur
es
:

Planting, Growing, and Caring for Trailing Lobelia Plants

By [Tim Goodwin](#)

Last Updated: August 1, 2024



Sign up for daily gardening advice and tips

Enter your email address

SIGN UP

ADVERTISEMENT



**The Almanac Garden Planner -
Use It Free for 7 Days!**

Plan your 2025 garden with our
award-winning Garden Planner.

Trailing lobelia is for its cascading growth and colorful blooms. It thrives in cool weather, producing blue, pink, purple, red, or white flowers. While it may decline in hot, humid conditions, regular pruning can encourage new growth. Best grown as an annual in most climates, lobelia adds vibrant color to hanging baskets, containers, and garden edges. Learn more about adding Lobelia to your life!

ADVERTISEMENT

About Trailing Lobelia

Lobelia erinus var. *pendula* is a trailing cultivar that puts on its best show from late spring to early summer when temperatures are cool. It blooms in shades of blue, pink, purple, red, and white. When summer's heat and humidity roll in, this beauty takes a break. Foliage and flowering decline signifi-

cantly. Lobelia is a cool-season plant.

for an encore performance. Look for heat-tolerant cultivars.

Trailing lobelia is a tender perennial winter-hardy in Zones 9 to 11 and treated as an annual elsewhere.



Photo: HelinFoto

Read Next

- [How to Grow Bacopa: The Complete Bacopa Flower Guide](#)
- [How to Grow Million Bells: Your Guide to Trailing Petunias](#)
- [Scaevola Success: Complete Guide to Growing Fan Flowers](#)

PLANTING

Purchasing seedlings

Starting from seeds can be difficult:

Seeds should be sown in [seed-starting mix](#) 8 to 10 weeks before the [last spring frost date](#). Do not cover with soil, as light aids germination. Water from the bottom to minimize the risk of damping off. Maintain a temperature of 70° to 75°F; seedlings emerge in 14 to 21 days, and blooms appear in 4 months.

Lobelia tolerates most slightly acidic soil types, but transplants will do well in [potting mix](#) amended with organic matter. Good drainage is essential.

GROWING

In warm to hot and/or humid regions, provide [partial shade](#); where summers are cool or hazy, trailing lobelia can take more direct sun.

Water to keep soil evenly moist. Apply

— Lobelia and Lobelia Seedlings —

Pinch tips to keep plants bushy. Cut stems back by half after its first major flowering to encourage new blooms. To avoid midsummer dieback as heat and humidity set in, cut plants back to promote a fall bloom.

Types

- *Lobelia erinus* var. *pendula* 'Blue Cascade': true blue blooms over pale foliage
- *L. erinus* var. *pendula* Cascade Mix: blooms in shades of blue, lavender, rose, red, and white
- *L. erinus* var. *pendula* Fountain series: large, early flowers; 'Crimson Fountain' blooms in deep red
- *L. erinus* var. *pendula* 'Sapphire': electric-blue flowers with white eye

GARDENING PRODUCTS

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS

Diseases: [Botrytis blight](#), damping off, Pythium root and stem rot.

Pests: none serious.

WIT AND WISDOM

- The genus name, *Lobelia*, pays tribute to Flemish physician and botanist Matthias de l'Obel (1538–1616), who (with Pierre Pena) in 1570 described a detailed new plant classification system based on leaves.
- Do not confuse with *L. cardinalis*, aka cardinal flower, a [native wildflower](#) with a spike form.
- The species *Lobelia erinus* is native to southern Africa.
- Beware: If ingested by humans, lobelia foliage may cause serious health problems. [Symptoms of Lobelia poisoning](#) include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, salivation, exhaustion and weakness, dilation of

FLOWERS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tim Goodwin



Tim Goodwin, the associate editor for The Old Farmer's Almanac, has been reading North America's oldest continuously published periodical since he was a young child, growing up just a short drive from the OFA office. [Read More from Tim Goodwin](#)

MORE LIKE THIS



**How to Grow
Bacopa: The
Complete
Bacopa
Flower Guide**



**How to Grow
Million Bells:
Your Guide to
Trailing
Petunias**



**Scaevola
Success:
Complete
Guide to
Growing Fan
Flowers**



**How to Grow
Ranunculus:
The Complete
Guide**



**How to Grow
Balloon
Flowers: The
Complete
Guide**



**How to Grow
Verbenas: The
Complete
Verbena
Flower Guide**



GROW YOUR BEST GARDEN YET

Join The Old Farmer's Almanac
Gardening Club Today!

[LEARN MORE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

COMMENTS

ADD A COMMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

THE OLD
FARMER'S STORE

ADVERTISEMENT

Our Brands Resources Connect

[Yankee Magazine](#)

[Free Daily](#)

[Family Tree](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Magazine](#)

[Webcam](#)

[NH Business](#)

[Advertise with Us](#)

[Review](#)

[Media Relations](#)

[New Hampshire](#)

[Sell the Almanac](#)

[Magazine](#)

[Where to Buy](#)

[Yankee Custom](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

[Marketing](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Cookie List](#)

[Do Not Sell or](#)

[Share My Personal](#)

[Information](#)

©2025 [Yankee Publishing Inc.](#), An Employee-Owned Company

1121 Main Street | P.O. Box 520 | Dublin, NH 03444