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How to Grow Lily of the Valley: The Complete Lily of the Valley Flower Guide



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Planting, Growing, and Caring for Lily of the Valley

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Lily of the Valley—known as May Bells,
Mary's Tears, and Our Lady's Tears—is a
woodland plant with attractive green
foliage and tiny, bell-shaped, white or
pink flowers. Learn how to plant, grow,
and care for the lily of the valley in
your garden!

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About Lily of the Valley

Lily of the valley is a low-growing (6 to 12
inches tall), spreading plant that comes up

majalis, which is among the most useful ground covers for shade.

Warning: Lily of the valley is known to be a very aggressive spreader. Plant with caution! All parts of the plant, including the berries, are poisonous to people and animals.

Lily of the valley blooms are bell-shaped and appear as a cluster on one side of a leafless stalk and last for about 3 weeks. The leaves are located at the base of the plant. The delicate white or soft pink flowers are very fragrant.

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- [Shady Characters: 10 Best Flowers and Plants For Shade Gardens](#)
- [20 Easy-to-Grow Perennial Flowers for Beginners](#)

PLANTING

When to Plant Lily of the Valley

- Plant in the spring or fall.

Choosing and Preparing a Planting Site

- Choose a location in the shade or partial shade.
- Find a spot where the soil drains well.
- Amend the soil with aged manure or compost.
- Lily of the Valley can also be planted in a container and placed in a shady spot.

How to Plant Lily of the Valley

- Dig a small hole.
- Place the rhizome with the pip

- Spread the roots out around the pip.
- Space the rhizomes about 6 inches apart.
- Cover with soil.
- Water thoroughly.

GROWING

How to Care for Lily of the Valley

- Side-dress with compost when new growth appears in the spring.
- Keep the soil evenly moist.
- Don't let plants dry out.
- After blooming don't remove the foliage.
- The plants will have orange **inedible** berries in the fall and the leaves turn golden.
- Mulch with aged manure or compost in late fall.

How to Propagate Lily of the Valley

- Divide Lily of the Valley when dormant in the spring or in the fall

- Replant the rhizomes about 6 inches apart.
- Water deeply.

How to Grow Lily of the Valley Indoors

- Dig up a few plants in the fall.
- Plant in a container and bring indoors.
- Place the container in a bright spot.
- The plants will bloom during the winter months.

Types

Convallaria majalis var. *rosea* has pink flowers. The flowers are less fragrant than the white varieties.

C. majalis '**Albostriata**' has white flowers and variegated leaves. The green leaves have creamy-white stripes.

C. majalis '**Bordeaux**' produces large white flowers on long stalks.

C. majalis '**Fernwood's Golden Slippers**' has attractive golden-green leaves in early spring.

U A D V E S T I N G

Lily of the Valley as Cut Flowers

- Pick when 1/4 of the buds are open.
- Include some leaves in the bouquet.
- Use small vases or containers.
- Place the vase in a cool place with medium light.
- The flowers will last up to a week.
- Change the water every other day.

GARDENING PRODUCTS



PESTS/DISEASES

Lily of the Valley is generally healthy and

Diseases: anthracnose; blight, Botrytis;
blight, southern; leaf spot, fungal; rust.

Pests: aphids; black vine weevils; lily leaf
beetles; nematodes, foliar; slugs/ snails;
spider mites.

WIT AND WISDOM

- Other names for lily of the Valley are May bells, Our Lady's tears, and Mary's tears.
- Lily of the Valley is not a lily. It belongs to the asparagus family.
- All parts of the plant are poisonous.
- In the language of flowers, the Lily of the Valley symbolizes the return of happiness.
- Lily of the Valley is the birth flower for May.
- According to folklore, Lily of the Valley is said to protect gardens from evil spirits.

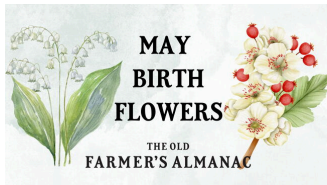
FLOWERS

Catherine Boeckmann

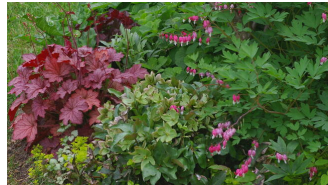


Catherine Boeckmann loves nature, stargazing, and gardening so it's not surprising that she and The Old Farmer's Almanac found each other. She leads digital content for the Almanac website, and is also a certified master gardener in the state of Indiana. [Read More from Catherine Boeckmann](#)

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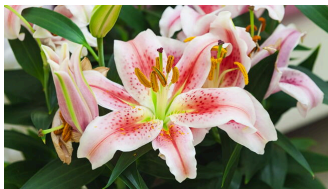
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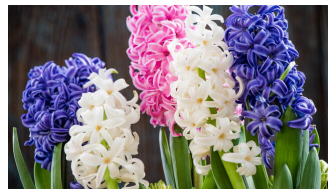
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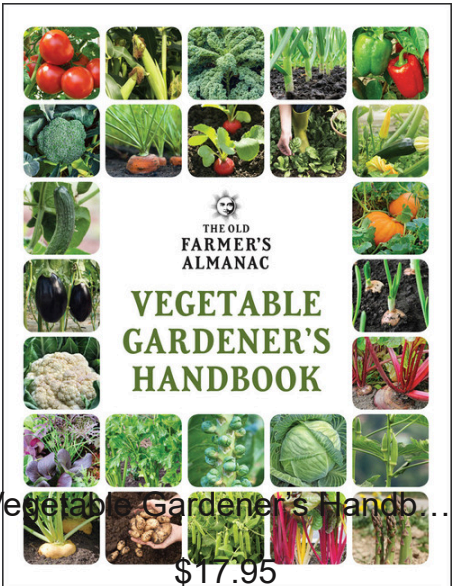
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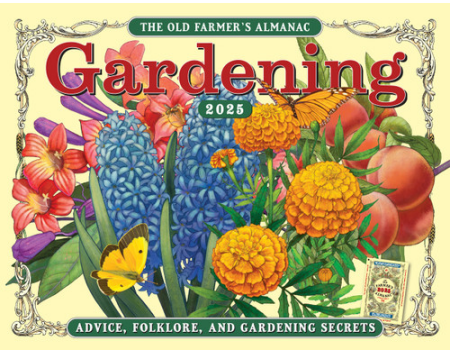
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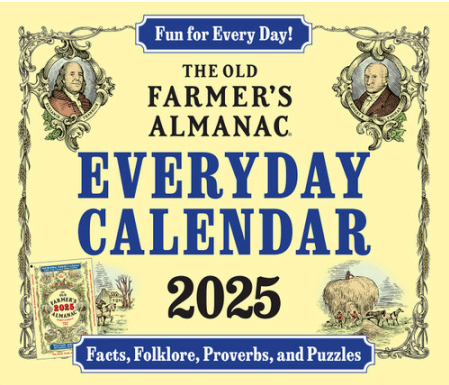
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