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How to Grow Pansies: The Complete Pansy Flower Guide



Photo Credit: Pixabay

Botani- cal Name:

Viola x wittrockiana

Plant Type:

[Flower](#)

Sun Exposure:

[Full Sun](#) , [Part Sun](#)

FREE GUIDE!

Soil [Slightly](#)
pH: [Acidic to](#)
[Neutral](#)

Blo [Spring](#) ,
om [Summer](#)
Tim , [Fall](#) ,
e: [Winter](#)

Flo [Blue](#) ,
wer [Multicolor](#)
Col [r](#) ,
or: [Orange](#) ,
[Pink](#) ,
[Purple](#) ,
[Red](#) ,
[White](#) ,
[Yellow](#)

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Planting, Growing, and Caring for Pansies

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Pansies are the cheerful flowers with up-turned “faces.” They love cool weather and are popular for growing in spring and fall. They’re also edible, adding color to salads, drinks, and cakes. Here’s how to plant pansies and keep them growing and blooming for bright, happy gardens and containers.

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About Pansies

Pansies are a type of Viola (*Viola × wittrockiana*) with large heart-shaped, overlapping petals and one of the widest ranges of bright, pretty colors and patterns.

Suitable for [containers](#) and borders and as ground cover, they are a go-to flower for reliable color almost year-round in some places

when planted with other cool-season flowers such as primroses, trailing lobelia, and sweet alyssum.

Are Pansies Annual or Perennial Flowers?

Most gardeners treat pansies (and all violas) as an annual, but they're actually hardy in USDA Zones 3–8. They tend to get too leggy in the heat of summer. There hasn't been much success in producing heat-tolerant pansies that can adequately survive hot weather.

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Pansies are surprisingly hearty in cold weather, though. They'll survive a frost,

which makes them a great flowering plant for fall and early winter color.



Read Next

- [How to Grow Petunias: The Complete Petunia Flower Guide](#)
- [How to Grow Tulip Flowers: The Complete Guide](#)
- [10 Pretty Pansy Varieties](#)

PLANTING

Plant in moist, humus-rich, well-drained soil. See our articles on [soil amendments](#) and [preparing soil for planting](#) for more information.

Pansies like full or partial sun but need cooler temperatures to thrive. The ideal planting site will get morning sun but avoid the late afternoon heat.

grow about 6 to 9 inches tall.

“A technique gaining in popularity is to plant spring blooming bulbs in fall in the usual fashion, and then install pansies in the same bed, right over the bulbs,” explains [Sherri Saunders from the University of Arkansas](#).

“The bulbs will emerge and bloom, providing additional color while the bulb foliage ripens.

This is a great way to get more color from your beds until it’s time to plant summer annuals.”

When to Plant Pansies

- Pansies can be planted in the early spring or in the fall.
- Pansies can be finicky to start from seed; buying established plants from a local nursery is a lot easier. Plus, you’ll get blooms a lot sooner.
- But if you want to start from seed, start pansy seeds indoors in late winter, 8 to 10 weeks before the [last spring frost](#), for early spring and summer flowering. Or, start seeds in late summer for fall and winter flowering. Pansy seeds may be slow to germinate (typically emerging in anywhere from 1 to 3 weeks, depending on

- Set pansy plants in the ground when it becomes workable in the spring. They grow best when soil temperatures are between 45°F and 65°F (7°C and 18°C).
- Pansies can tolerate a light frost just after planting, but try to hold off on putting them in the ground if temperatures are still regularly reaching well below freezing.

Growing Pansies in Pots

- Pansies are great for containers. Just use standard potting soil designed for containers.
- Plant in portable containers (12 inches or less in diameter) so the plants can be moved to a cooler area when the sun starts to get stronger. Early in the spring season or in the fall, a south-facing patio might be the perfect spot. During the summer, move pansies to the east side of your home for morning sun and afternoon shade.

GROWING

How to Care for Pansies

- Remember to water pansies regularly. One of the most common reasons pansies fail is

they are not doing well, try watering them more.

- You can use a general, all-purpose fertilizer around your pansies to help them grow. Be wary of using a nitrogen-heavy fertilizer, as this can result in more foliage than flowers.
- Remove faded/dead flowers to encourage the plants to produce more blooms and prolong the blooming season. You can either pinch off the flower bud or cut it off just below the faded bud.



Beautiful pansies are a wonderful addition to any garden!

Types

- **'Jolly Joker'** blooms in spring and summer and has orange flowers with deep purple upper petals and a purple outline.
- The **Princess Series** offers a variety of colors such as blue, purple, and yellow.
- **The Fama Series** flowers in winter and

See [10 pansy varieties](#) and pretty pictures!

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- [Powdery mildew](#)
- Crown rot and root rot
- [Rust](#)
- [Gray mold](#)
- [Spot anthracnose](#)
- [Slugs](#), [snails](#), and [aphids](#)

How Do You Keep Rabbits From Eating Pansies?

garden. You could also sprinkle bloodmeal around your pansies after each rainfall; it will also benefit the soil by adding nitrogen. However, don't try it if you have dogs that roam the garden. They may be attracted to the scent and start digging.

WIT AND WISDOM

- Pansies symbolize “thinking” or “thoughts.” The word “pansy” comes from French *pensée*, meaning “thought.” Find out more [flower meanings here](#).
- Pansies are one of several [edible garden flowers](#)! They have a mild minty flavor and make for a lovely edible flourish on a salad or dessert.

FLOWERS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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

Indiana. [Read More from Catherine](#)

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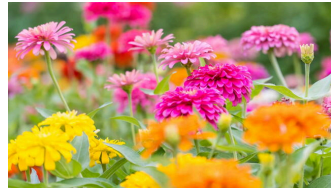
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COMMENTS

ADD A COMMENT

Marion (not verified) 6 months 3 weeks ago

Do deer eat pansies?

REPLY

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Joe Bills 6 months 3 weeks ago

Deer will eat pansies, and short of fences or high garden walls, there's no completely fool-proof way to keep deer from finding yours. One trick that sometimes works, however, is to plant pansies among

University Extension Service offer some helpful tips on protecting your gardens from deer:

<https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/ornamental-and-garden-plants-controlling-deer-damage.html>

REPLY

Joe (not verified) 11 months ago

As I've read every where, pansies are an annual, and are either purchased as a plant or started from seed. What's curious to me is I have these growing ALL over my property!! Full sun, part shade, through the cracks of the concrete,,, you name it, I have them growing! Each year I have several that come up here and there, but this year is a record.

If I have one, I have a million!

REPLY

Pam Sinewe (not verified) 1 year 11 months ago

How do you deadhead pansies?

REPLY

Jennifer Keating 1 year 11 months ago

You can either pinch-off the flower bud
or cut it off just below the faded bud. New
flowers will come up on new stems.

REPLY

A (not verified) 3 years ago

Will the pansy grow If I keep it in my room? I don't
get a lot of direct sunlight though

REPLY

The Editors 3 years ago

Pansies are sun-loving plants that enjoy
cool weather, so not the best choice for a
room without direct sunlight! See our ar-
ticle on best indoor plants for
low light: [https://www.almanac.com/bes](https://www.almanac.com/best-indoor-plants-low-light)
[t-indoor-plants-low-light](https://www.almanac.com/best-indoor-plants-low-light)

REPLY

Kathie Terpening (not verified) 3 years 2 months

[REPLY](#)

The Editors 3 years 2 months ago

You can do either—pinch off the flower bud or cut it off just below the faded bud. New flowers will come up on new stems.

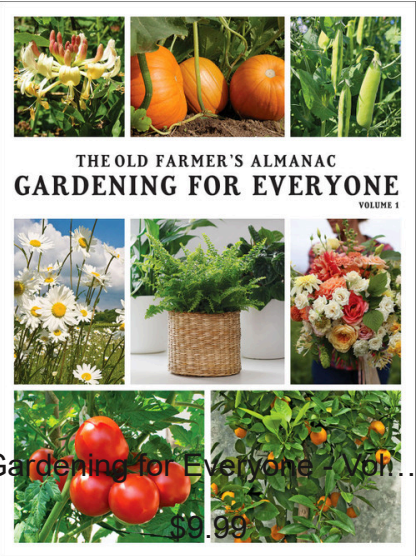
[REPLY](#)

Juanita Montoya (not verified) 3 years 10 months ago

can pansies be brought back to life if they are cut down?

[REPLY](#)[MORE COMMENTS](#)

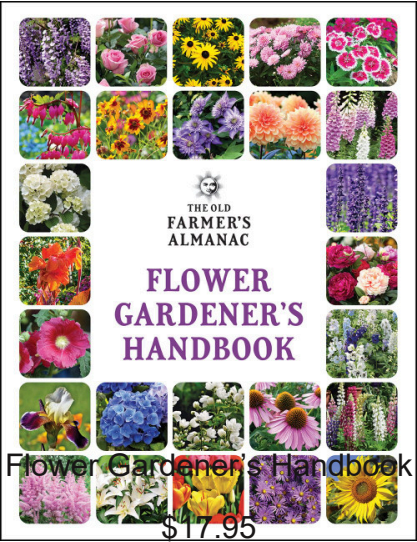
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