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How to Grow Crocuses: The Complete Crocus Flower Guide



Photo Credit: Pixabay

Botanical Name:	<i>Crocus</i>
Plant Family:	<u>Flow</u>

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Planting, Growing, and Caring for Crocuses

By [Catherine Boeckmann](#)

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Crocuses are critter-resistant bulbs that are a welcome sight in spring! Just when it seems like winter will never lose its icy grip, the dainty crocus pushes through the snow to put on a show of colorful revival. Here's more on how to plant and grow crocuses, a

About Crocuses

From [snow crocuses](#) (the first to bloom) to giant Dutch crocuses, all just 2 to 4 inches tall, these blooms offer a variety of colors (blues, oranges, pinks, purples, reds, yellows, and more) that stand out against the bleak late-winter landscape. Many have strong perfumes that lure bees out of their hives in February or March, too, providing the pollinators with an important early-spring food source.

Crocuses not only provide winter garden color but also naturalize, meaning that they spread and come back year after year—with minimal care—for an ever-larger display. As a bonus, [deer](#), [squirrels](#), and [rabbits](#) rarely bother early little crocus corms.

Read Next

- [The Best Flower Bulbs to Plant in the Fall](#)

- [Growing Alliums: The Ornamental Onions](#)

PLANTING

Crocuses do best in a spot that gets full sun (6+ hours of direct sunlight), but will grow in partial sun as well. Choose a planting site where there is well-draining soil; the corms will rot in soggy, compacted ground. Before planting, work in organic matter such as [compost](#) to a depth of at least 10 inches.

When to Plant Crocuses

- Crocuses need to experience an extended period of cold weather in order to bloom, so **plant them in the fall to get spring blooms.**
- Before the ground freezes in the fall, crocus corms can be planted most anywhere, except in the dense shade on the north side of buildings

- Ideally, plant crocus corms 6 to 8 weeks before a hard frost is expected in the fall and when the soil temperature is below 60°F (16°C). This is usually during September or October in the northern U.S. and Canada, and October or November in the southern United States.

How to Plant Crocuses

- Plant crocus corms 3 to 4 inches deep (with the pointy end up). After planting, water well.
- Plant bulbs in groups or clusters rather than spacing them in a single line along a walkway or border. Single flowers get lost in the landscape. Plant a few inches apart, and plant in groups of 10 or more.
- Consider planting crocuses in lawns and meadows where they can form carpets, or mass them in the front of flower beds along the edge.
- Plant taller spring-flowering bulbs

→ [Learn more about planting fall](#)

[bulbs.](#)



A carpet of crocuses makes for a wonderful spring sight!

GROWING

- Apply a balanced fertilizer in early autumn if your spring is short and the days heat up fast; or apply fertilizer after bulbs flower in late winter if your spring is long and temperate. The crocuses will have a chance to use the extra nutrients to produce bigger carbohydrate stores.
- Through the autumn, keep crocus beds watered if the weather gets dry, but do not waterlog the

- In late February, remove heavy mulches from snowdrops and crocuses so that the shoots can come through. Leave a light layer of leaves to provide late-season protection from frost.
- In February and March, keep plastic milk jugs or other coverings on hand to protect the flowers of crocuses and other early bloomers against the return of severe weather.
- If you have crocuses growing in your lawn in mid-spring, don't mow until their leaves have died down.

Types

- **'Bowles White'** produces white flowers with deep golden yellow throats in early spring. It grows 2 to 3 inches tall.
- **'Flower Record'** has single pale violet flowers in spring to early summer. It grows 4 to 5 inches tall.
- **'Richfield'** is a striped crocus with

tall and blooms in spring to early summer.

- **'Tricolor Crocus'** is a beauty. Each narrow flower has three distinct bands of lilac, white, and golden yellow. It grows 3 inches tall and blooms in late winter and early spring.
- **'Purpureus Grandiflorus'** has abundance violet flowers with purple bases. It grows 4 to 5 inches tall and blooms spring to early summer.



Crocuses peeking up through the snow.

GARDENING PRODUCTS



PESTS/DISEASES

- Mice, voles, and squirrels may feed on the corms. If they are a problem, consider planting crocuses in buried wire cages.
- **Birds** sometimes pick off the flowers.
- Corms in storage are prone to **rot** and **molds** if kept too moist.

WIT AND WISDOM

- In the language of flowers, crocus means cheerfulness.

*And all the woods are alive with the
murmur and sound of Spring,
And the rose-bud breaks into pink on
the climbing briar,
And the crocus-bed is a quivering moon
of fire
Girdled round with the belt of an
amethyst ring.
–Oscar Wilde*

BULBS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

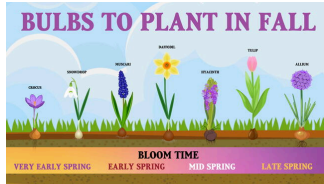
Catherine Boeckmann



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 Almanac

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COMMENTS

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Vickie Hart (not verified) 7 months ago

My crocus are stems are coming back up now (end September). This happened last year but never bloomed. It looks like I have weeds in need to pull. Any suggestions? -

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[REPLY](#)

Hi Vickie,

So, our assumption is that the crocus flowers you are talking about are the spring blooming variety that already flowered earlier this year. There are fall blooming varieties as well, but them coming up at this point of the season would not be abnormal.

It is rather unusual for crocuses to emerge a second time in a season given they need to experience an extended period of cold weather in order to bloom.

Since they did not bloom last year, is there a chance that it is in fact something else emerging (like a late-season weed) in the same area? Regardless, you can wait for them to die back and remove later in the season so the area is nice

Hope this helps!

REPLY

Alan Cooper (not verified) 1 year ago

Can people who are allergic to pollen in flowers have a problem with crocuses?

REPLY

The Editors 1 year ago

Dear Alan,

While it's possible that someone who is allergic to pollen may have an issue with crocuses, they do appear on lists of plants recommended for pollen-allergy sufferers.

[The Missouri Botanical Garden](#) offers a robust resource for the best

—The Editors

REPLY

Su (not verified) 1 year 7 months ago

Hi,

I want to plant crocus , daffodils bulbs in my lawn.

How do I prevent crocus from spreading to my neighbours lawn?

Thanks,

Su

REPLY

Linda Rossi (not verified) 2 years 2 months ago

Just bought bulbs and want to know can I plant them now and they will take 3/23

REPLY

You could certainly plant them, but unless they have been pre-chilled, they are unlikely to bloom this year. They should still produce leaves, though, which will set them up nicely for blooming next spring.

REPLY

Bernard Nuber (not verified) 3 years 1 month ago

Last fall I planted Saffron Crocus for the first time. I planted them in a large pot, outdoors. They grew fine, bloomed and I even got several stigmas from them. Once the flowers died, the plants produced a grass like growth. It's about 10 to 12 inches long. Do I need to trim this growth back or should I leave it alone? Like I said they are new to my garden, and I would like them to grow back. Thanks for any info anyone can give me.

REPLY

angelasnyder.a... (not verified) 2 years 3 months ago

Bernard, as with all bulbs you want to leave the leaves alone until they die back so the corms can gather energy from the sun and they will come back and possibly naturalize in your garden depending on where you are and your growing conditions. Once the leaves have died back then you can cut the old foliage down to the ground. A bulb fertilizer will help them grow better if you fertilize, I believe, after the blooms are done. Happy gardening!

REPLY

Donna Haves (not verified) 3 years 2

Is there any difference in the care for saf-
fron crocus?

REPLY

MORE COMMENTS

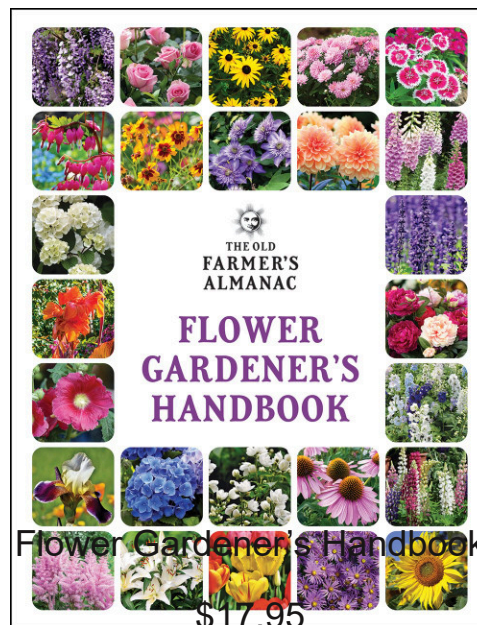
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