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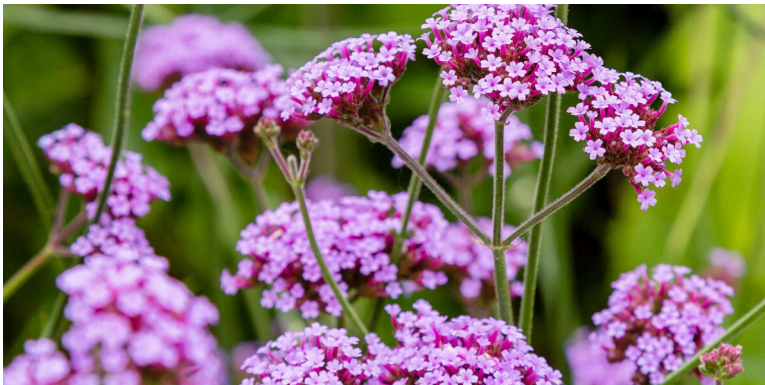
Thursday, May 1, 2025



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How to Grow Verbenas: The Complete Verbena Flower Guide



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Planting, Growing, and Caring for Verbenas

By [Catherine Boeckmann](#)
Last Updated: April 15, 2024



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TRY NOW

Verbena is a long-blooming flower that can be grown as an annual or a perennial and is beloved by pollinators.

Learn how to plant, grow, and care for verbenas in your garden!

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About Verbena

Verbena, also known as **vervain**, is a long-blooming, heat-tolerant perennial or annual flower. Verbenas come in many colors and sizes; some grow up to 6 feet tall while other varieties are short ground covers that reach no higher than a foot. The tiny flowers are grouped into rounded clusters.

Many perennial varieties are relatively short lived and can be grown as annual plants since they will bloom

verbenas grown from seed do not do well in hot and humid regions. Verbenas are perfect for containers, hanging baskets, and window boxes.

Read Next

- [Growing Snapdragons: A Complete Guide](#)
- [How to Grow Heliotropes: The Complete Guide](#)
- [How to Grow Anemones: The Complete Anemone Flower Guide](#)

PLANTING

When to Plant Verbena

- Start seeds indoors about 8 weeks before your [last frost date](#).
- Plant transplants outdoors when the soil has warmed to at least 60°F (15°C) in the spring and the threat of frost has passed.

Choosing and Preparing a

- Make sure the soil drains well.
Heavy clay soils will cause root rot.
Dig in compost to lighten-up
your soil.

How to Plant Verbena

- Pinch the tips of the branches at
planting time to encourage branch-
ing and a fuller plant.
- Keep soil moist until plants
are established.

GROWING

How to Care for Verbena

- During their blooming period, wa-
ter the plants once a week if they
do not receive an inch of rain
that week.
- When bloom slows during the sum-
mer, trim the whole plant back by
about one fourth of its height.
Water thoroughly.
Rebloom will occur within 2 to

- Apply a complete fertilizer (16-4-8) in mid- to late spring and again after trimming back.
- In the fall, you can trim back the plants lightly to give them a neater appearance, but do not cut severely until spring, when new growth begins to appear.
- Some varieties will re-seed and naturalize in the garden.

Propagating Verbena

- Perennial verbena are relatively short lived, typically lasting two to three years in the garden. Divide mature perennial clumps in the spring.
- Take stem cuttings in late summer or early fall. Remove the bottom pair of leaves right at the stem. Dip the bottom of the stem in rooting hormone and plant about 1 inch deep in a container with moist potting soil. Place the container on a sunny windowsill to root.

Types

- **Purpletop Vervain (*Verbena bonariensis*):** 4 to 5 feet tall with clusters of small lavender flowers. Short-lived perennial that will self-sow.
- **Blue Vervain (*V. hastata*):** 2 to 5 feet tall; resembles *V. bonariensis*, but is more tolerant of cold and moist soil. Blue-violet flowers.
- **Rigid Verbena (*V. rigida*):** The plant spreads by long rhizomes (underground stems) in all directions and forms a thick groundcover. The plant is hardy and drought resistant. 'Santos' grows to about a foot tall with pinkish-purple blooms.
- **Moss Verbena (*V. tenuisecta*):** Moss verbena has finely cut leaves and a very low growing habit. Many of the cultivars are hybrids with other species. Tapien Series plants have

- **Trailing**

- **Annual**

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Verbena vs. Lemon

Verbena (*Aloysia citrodora*)

Lemon verbena, a small shrub with lemon-scented leaves, is popular as an herb garden plant; its leaves are used to flavor a number of dishes, from seafood to yogurt dips. Although lemon verbena is in the verbena family, *Verbenaceae*, it's classified in a separate genus as true verbena (*Verbena*) and *Glandularia*.

HARVESTING

Verbenas as Cut Flowers

The taller varieties of verbena with stiff slender stems and airy clusters of flowers last a long time in flower arrangements.

GARDENING PRODUCTS

- Aphids
- Spider mites
- Leaf miners
- Thrips
- Snails/slugs
- Powdery mildew

Verbena is rabbit and deer resistant.

WIT AND WISDOM

- *Verbena* is Latin for “sacred plant.”
- When the Romans sent messengers of peace to other nations, they attached stems of verbena to their clothes.
- In folk medicine, a mixture of verbena leaves boiled in vinegar was used to treat rheumatic pains, lumbago, and pleurisy.

FLOWERS

Catherine Boeckmann

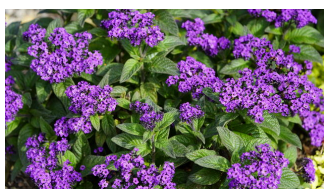


Catherine Boeckmann loves nature, stargazing, and gardening so it's not surprising that she and The Old Farmer's Almanac found each other. She leads digital content for the Almanac website, and is also a certified master gardener in the state of Indiana. [Read More from Catherine Boeckmann](#)

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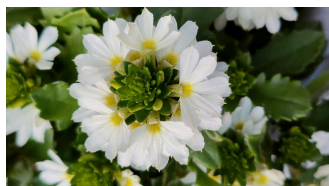
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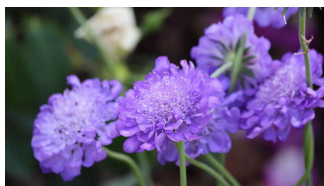
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Kerry (not verified) 7 months 2 weeks ago

Does Vervain have a scent? I seem to recall
soaps with verbena that were scented.

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