

HOW TO PLANT AZALEAS

Azaleas are breathtaking flowering shrubs well-loved by their bright, glowing flowers and lovely fragrance. It is native to East Asia where wild species are widely distributed in China, Japan, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. It is one of the top ten famous flowers in China. Due to its high ornamental value, it is widely cultivated in parks all over the world. Some varieties can grow more than 20 feet tall while dwarf varieties stay under 3 feet. Most azaleas bloom in mid-spring with a cluster of 2-6 flowers, funnel-shaped corolla. They bloom in spectacular range of colors from white to pale pink to reds and whites are welcome addition to any gardens. Given the right care and attention, you will not be disappointed with the amazing blooms all year round.

Planting Procedure:

Step 1: Preparing to Plant

- A. There are different varieties of azaleas that have different needs. You may consult local garden centre for proper recommendation of azalea variety that is suitable in your area.
- B. Azaleas prefer dappled shade, so find a spot that is a mix of sunlight and shade to grow well.
- C. Provide a well-draining soil for the azaleas. If the soil is not draining well, you can add some compost organic matter to loosen it up.
- D. The ideal soil pH level is around 5.5 or 6 for the azaleas. Conduct a soil test to determine acidity level of the soil, if it borders on alkaline soil, mix some sulfur into the dirt before planting to remedy this.



Step 2: Planting the Azalea

- A. Use a garden shovel to create a hole in the dirt that should be deep enough to cover the roots and bottom of the plant. Take the azalea out of the container pot and loosen its roots. Set the plant upright in the hole and spread the soil around and under the azalea, give it a light pat to settle it in place.
- B. Water the plant at least once per week or water it more frequently if it is in direct sunlight.
- C. Add some mulch materials like pine bark, sawdust, wood chips or pine needles between the bushes to retain soil moisture and temperature. It is also a good way to prevent weeds from growing. Re-apply mulch after the blooms have faded.
- D. Azaleas do not require fertilizer as long as the soil is rich and acidic.



Step 3: Pruning the Azalea

- A. Remove dead branches in the spring.
- B. When the blooms fade, you can do light pruning.
- C. Do major pruning if it has grown to large proportions and it will grow back bushy and beautiful.

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