

Fifteen or More Tips for Planting Bulbs

Vern and Lynne Dearing

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Information gleaned from WSU Benton County Extension "Steps for Planting Spring Flowering Bulbs" p1-3, Marianne Binetti "Don't Limit your choices when planting spring Blooming Bulbs" in *The Olympian*, 9/30/201 p 12B, and Satsop Bulb Farm "Bulb Growing Tips", Netherland Bulb Company handout "This Fall, Think Spring", The VanEngelen Inc., Fall 2018 Wholesale Prince List Catalog and personal experience.

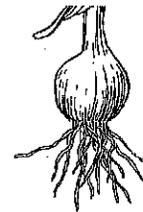
1. Visualize as to where you want bulbs. Is there sun? Color and type of bulbs desired, massed or singly in row, ground, barrel, how big of an area, how is the drainage? Bulbs do not like wet feet! Daffodils are most striking when planted in clumps of 3-4 or better yet in drifts of 10-30 bulbs. They can of course be planted as a border if that is your taste. Draw up your chair and assess the microclimate of your yard. Daffodils and other bulbs prefer a south facing slope that assures plenty of sun and soil that is well-drained. Dappled sunlight is okay.
2. Outline the area where you will plant bulbs so you do not inadvertently cut into a bed later when planting other plants before bulbs begin to show. It is best to have a paper map of where you plant in your yard.
3. Buy good Bulbs-a reputable dealer, how they should be packaged, how they should feel, sharing, Satsop Bulb Farm, Van Engelen Inc, other, Expedition to get bulbs if you do not get them by mail. We do a Sunday in September and we are gone 3-4 hours. Usually a beautiful day
4. Use the right tools: Apron, dibble, spades, kneely pad, gloves, trowel, screen for squirrels, planter, compost, rake, other.
5. Wear the right clothing-hat, long sleeved shirt, sunscreen, gloves
6. Dig in some compost and other amendments (some use bone meal, blood meal, fertilizers, Tagrow, mushroom compost, fertilizer)
7. Plant bulbs the right depth, 3 times the size of the bulb or 4-9 inches deep. Cover with soil and screen. You can trench them or lay them out and individually plant them. (How many bulbs-look at table). For example, a daffodil bulb should have the growing tip at least 6 inches below ground so the bulb should be planted in a hole 8-10 inches deep. Digging animals, like squirrels get discouraged if you plant bulbs the right depth
8. Use a screen to cover the area where you planted bulbs. This will discourage squirrels from digging the bulbs up as they love to dig in newly turned soil.
9. Don't strip away the parchment like layers on a daffodil bulb. These layers protect the tender plant while it is lying in a dormant state.
10. Water them and water every month throughout the winter if it is dry.
11. Put your tools away and clean them (wipe them and put them away, wash gloves). (We use a metal scraper and then dip the tools in sand mixed with a small amount of motor oil in a bucket. We wipe them down. Some use Clorox wipes or Scrubbing Bubbles or other cleaner.
12. You can use leaves or straw to cover them so moisture is not excessive (dahlias if you leave them in the ground).
13. Watch for slugs when the bulbs start showing growth. May use slug bait or beer or pick them (early am or early evening)

14. Can pick tightly budded flowers and put them in a vase of warm water and they will be open the next day.
15. Bulbs require a cold temperature in order to bloom so if you are forcing bulbs for Christmas or some holiday, keep in the refrigerator until around Thanksgiving. Then anchor them in a pretty colored gravel in a tall vase and water them every other week or so. (Some people use vodka to keep the stems straight up). Vernalization
16. Take flowers to work and they will cheer you even on a not so good day. Don't put the leaves in water.
17. Resist the urge to cut off the stems when the flowers die. They need the stems to get energy from the sun to store in the bulb. The process is complete when they turn brownish yellow. It really helps if you plant other flowers with the bulbs to hide the unkempt stems. Intersperse later flowering plants among clumps or drifts of daffodils so they hide the leaves as they wilt, fall over and look scruffy.
18. Wait for the magical growth of flowers.

Planting Quantities

To determine the number of flower bulbs needed for the area in your garden, first figure out the square footage. For large bulbs, plant four bulbs per square foot. For small bulbs, plant nine bulbs per square foot. For example, a 10 foot by 20 foot garden, 200 square feet, would require 1,800 small bulbs or 800 large bulbs.

Total Square Footage of Bed	Small Bulbs 4" Apart	Large Bulbs 6" Apart
50	450	200
100	900	400
200	1,800	800
300	2,700	1,200
500	4,500	2,000



n Inc. Phone: (860) 567-8734 Fax: (860) 567-5323