

Annual Plant Container Care

How to select annuals and care for them



Planting in containers has increased in popularity for several years. There is a huge selection of plants that are suitable for container growth.

Homeowners will grow vegetables, flowers and maybe a small tree all on their patio for esthetic beauty. As long as they are properly cared for, the skies the limit when selecting which plants to put in containers!

Plant Selection

Correct plant selection is important in container gardening. Many annuals are great for containers. We especially like to use Petunias, Calibrachoa, Verbena, Lantana, Dorotheanthus, sweet potato vine and lobelia. When selecting your plant combination select plants that require the same water and light requirements. Often homeowners are tempted to add perennials, shrubs and trees to their containers. If they have the same care requirements this will work great, however, those plants can not be overwintered in the above ground pots in this area.

Planting Techniques

The most important factors for successful container gardening is quality soil and a container with proper drainage. *Premier ProMix Soil* is used both in our greenhouses and at our homes. Soil should be replaced every year as disease and insects can overwinter in soil. Before placing your plants incorporate a slow-release into your soil such as *Fertilome Start and Grow* or *Osmocote*. After placing the plants in the container, dig holes the same depth as the root ball and 2 times wider. If roots are circling around the root ball, carefully cut the roots and loosen the roots to grow out into the soil media.



Caring For Your Container Plants

Monitoring your container for water is very important. The placement of your container as well as the plants used will determine how often the plants will need to be watered. The first couple of weeks, your plants will need frequent watering—usually daily until the roots start to expand. After establishment deep, infrequent watering is best to encourage deep root growth, so monitor your containers daily to make sure plants are not getting too dry. As you water, apply enough water to drain out of the bottom of your container to ensure you have watered it deeply enough. Incorporating a liquid fertilizer every 2 -3 weeks with *JR Peters Bloom Booster* or *Fertilome Blooming and Rooting* or *All Purpose Plant Food* will further feed your plants for proper growth and flowering.

