

planting fall bulbs

A GARDENER'S HOW-TO FOR PLANTING BULBS AND ENJOYING A BEAUTIFUL SPRING

choosing your bulbs

Planting fall bulbs is an investment in a colorful, delightful spring. Choose from a wide variety of bulbs including some of the classics (daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, and crocus) or experiment with less common charmers (fritillaria, allium, Siberian squill, winter aconite, snowdrops, or grape hyacinths). Ask your Altum's landscape expert for advice on garden planning, flower styles and color variations, and how to achieve the look you're after. Whatever your choice, and with a bit of preparation, your spring garden will be the perfect antidote to a long, cold winter.

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As with most garden endeavors, proper site preparation is important. Here are a few valuable pointers to get you started:

TULIPTIP: A word to the wise...wait until October to plant tulip bulbs so they do not sprout prematurely. Other bulbs may be planted earlier.

PROTECTYOURINVESTMENT: If you've had or suspect you might have a problem with wildlife digging up your bulbs for dinner, try these varieties: allium, daffodils/narcissus/jonquils, fritillaria, hyacinths. You can also plant your bulbs inside a wire mesh cage, dust bulbs with cayenne pepper, and/or use an animal repellent such as Liquid Fence. For deer resistant options, try: daffodils/narcissus, Siberian squill, winter aconite, Snowdrops, or grape hyacinths.

THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB: Try a bulb planter or auger for speedy planting and a kneeling pad for extra comfort.

GOOD DRAINAGE: Bulbs prefer good drainage, so work in organic matter such as compost, manure, or Altum's Soil Amendment to help loosen our heavy clay soil.

NUTRITION: Mix Bulb-Tone bulb food or Superphosphate with soil to stimulate root growth and early spring growth.

RULES OF THUMB: The most important thing to remember is that bulbs should be planted approximately 2-3 times as deep as their diameter (please see the planting and spacing chart below for guidelines). New growth comes from the pointed end, so be sure the point is facing up. Give bulbs a good drink after planting.

KEEP IT NATURAL: Plant bulbs in odd-numbered masses and avoid straight lines, opting instead for staggered placement that gives a natural, flowing look. Consider interplanting annual and perennial beds with bulbs for early color and camouflage for yellowing, dormant bulb foliage after bloom time.

ENJOY: Enjoy the show. Spring becomes a real treat with colorful, fragrant blooms.

POST BLOOM: After blooming, fertilize with bulb food and remove spent flowers. Allow foliage to remain—it houses stored energy for the bulbs—until it turns brown and is ready to be cut back.

planting guidelines

BULB VARIETY	PLANTING DEPTH*	SPACING
Allium/Ornamental Onion	varies (pls. ask for details)	2-6"
Anemone	2-3"	4-6"
Camassia	4-5"	3-4"
Glory of the snow (<i>Chionodoxa</i>)	2-3"	3"
Fall Crocus (<i>Colchicum</i>)	3"	6-9"
Crocus	2-3"	2-3"
Cyclamen	—"	6-8"
Winter Aconite (<i>Eranthis</i>)	1-2"	1-2"
Fritillaria	4-8"	2-12"
Snowdrops (<i>Galanthus</i>)	3-4"	2-3"
Hyacinths	4-6"	6-8"
Dutch Iris	3-4"	2-4"
Snowflake (<i>Leucojum</i>)	3-4"	4-6"
Grape Hyacinths (<i>Muscari</i>)	2-3"	1-4"
Narcissus/Daffodils/Jonquils	4-6"	2-6"
Siberian Squill (<i>Scilla</i>)	2-3"	2-4"
Tulips	4-6"	3-6"

Please note: planting depth begins at the base of the bulb and is approximate. Your depth should be based on the size/diameter of your bulb.

And remember, our Altum's garden and landscape experts are always here to help. You can always pick up the phone and call 317.733.GROW or stop in for expert diagnosis and friendly advice.