

## fall mums & asters

A HOW-TO GUIDE TO ADDING COOL-WEATHER COLOR

### fall mums & asters

Two of the garden's most famous fall friends, chrysanthemums (commonly called "mums") and asters are known for adding full, brilliant fall color. Asters are perennials related to the sunflower (and surprisingly, the dandelion), which means you can expect them to return year after year. Mums come in many hardy varieties and virtually every color but blue, with the most common featuring decorative petals surrounding a thick center disc.

### how to care for your mums & asters

**LIGHT:** Choose a sunny location being careful to avoid overly exposed or northwest facing sites.

**TEMPERATURE:** Optimal planting time is early fall when plants have ample time to establish roots well before the ground freezes.

**PLANTING:** Be sure to loosen roots before planting and place close to a building or structure for added winter heat. Amend clay soil with good topsoil or compost for better drainage.

**FERTILIZER:** When planting, use **Start-n-Grow** or **Superphosphate** in each hole. Add **Blooming & Rooting** at the first sign of growth.

**WATER:** Water generously when planting, then keep mums and asters well watered during the growing season, allowing them to dry between watering. Add a layer of hardwood mulch to preserve moisture and protect your plants.

**WINTER:** To overwinter, cut mums and asters back and mulch over them with 4-6" after the first freeze.

**PRUNING:** Pinch back bud growth four times between spring emergence and July 4<sup>th</sup>. Do not pinch back after July 4<sup>th</sup> to give flower buds a chance to develop.

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