

Flowers for Bouquets

Planning for Bouquets:

The best way to plan your garden for bouquets is to dedicate a specific garden area to these cutting flowers. This way you can cut all that is in flower on any particular day without feeling that you might spoil your landscape display. If space limits this possibility, plan to intermingle your flowers for cutting with the rest of the garden. Be sure to start with well-amended soil, adding lots of organic material. Your plants depend on good, well-drained soil to perform and bloom well.

To maximize the number of flowers on each plant, keep blooming flowers well picked and remove spent flower heads. This will keep seed pods from forming, a process that signals the plant to stop producing more flower buds as its vegetative purpose in flowering is finished. Keep all your flowers well watered throughout the season, supplementing what nature supplies. A side dressing of well-balanced fertilizer several months after planting and during heavy harvesting also helps keep new flowers coming with good size and form.

All our cutting flowers are strong bloomers producing high yields of long-stemmed flowers. You'll find a variety of shapes and complementary colors and an overlapping succession of bloom from early summer until frost.



Cutting Flowers in the Garden:

The best time to cut flowers is in the early morning. This is because blossoms have recovered overnight from the stresses of the day's growth and stems are tight with water taken up during cooler moist nighttime conditions. Morning is also the best time to tell which blossoms are brand new and best to harvest. A newly opened flower is always better to pick because it has not been worked and pollinated by the bees. Pollinated flowers immediately begin the process of fading and forming seed and their petals also tend to be more stained after the bees or other pollinators have visited them. Unpollinated fresh new blossoms will have a longer vase life. If your schedule does not permit morning flower harvesting, cut them in the cool of the evening as a second choice. Avoid cutting flowers in the heat of the day.

To harvest flowers for bouquets, carry a small bucket filled with lukewarm water (not cold) out with you into the garden. Place stems of cut flowers directly into the bucket as soon as they are cut. Try to keep the bucket of flowers out of the sun as you pick. Cut stems with a sharp scissors or knife, and never yank their stems or break them off with your fingers if you expect them to last in a bouquet. A cleanly cut flower stem (either cut straight or at an angle) allows plant cells in the stems to continue to circulate and take up water.

Remember, cut flowers are alive and need careful treatment so they will last in your bouquets. Cut stems several inches longer than you think you'll need, so they can be recut as necessary.



There are a few flowers, notably [Poppies](#), whose stems contain a milky sap that will clog other flowers. Prevent this by quickly singeing them over a flame before placing in water. After bringing the bucket of flowers in from the garden, condition them by letting them rest in the water. They will last much longer than if picked just before making your

bouquet. This conditioning process is especially important if you plan to display flowers using floral foam.

Flowers for Bouquets from Renee's Garden Seeds



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