

# How to... get the most from Pansies

Part of the Pacific Nurseries  
'How to...' series

## Part 1: ABOUT PACIFIC PANSIES

### Why buy Pacific Pansies?

We firmly believe that we grow the very best Pansies that are available - the result of many years growing experience including trialling different varieties, composts and watering regimes to arrive at the quality plants which you will find at Pacific.

The young Pansy seedlings are bred by Syngenta, an international breeding house. Their Delta Series of winter Pansies have been readily available for ten years. We have chosen this strain of Pansy as they show incredible consistency through their extensive range of 25 colours. The large flowers are carried on short stocky stems that are robust even in the harshest autumn and winter weather.

The flowering capability of Winter Pansies is governed by day length; by mid December the short daylight hours prevent new buds from opening and this continues until the end of January when the days once again lengthen. The flowers on the Delta range of Pansies appear uniformly across the full colour range and as the spring progresses, once again the Pansies flower and flower. Towards the middle of May the plants have exhausted themselves and can be replaced with summer bedding plants.

### Companion plants for your Autumn Patio Planters and tubs

We always display a great selection of plants for making exciting winter patio pots. The family of Skimmia make excellent centrepiece shrubs carrying their colourful flower buds - which open into fragrant flowers in March above their glossy green foliage. There are two red-berried varieties, *Skimmia reevesiana* and *Skimmia pabella*. *Cineraria* (silver leaf) is a superb bright foliage plant along with small evergreen grasses to stand proudly between the Pansies. Winter flowering and bud blooming Heathers are always reliable and these, together with a wide choice of mini evergreen shrubs, should give plenty of colourful options.

**Don't forget...** Why not try some of the small flowering violas? These are becoming increasingly popular and, although there is not the extensive colour choice, their garden and pot performance is truly excellent.

See page 2 for Pansy care...



Pansies are a wonderful  
Autumn staple - the colours  
bring a welcome display to  
pots and borders

The team at Pacific Nurseries is highly experienced. As plant growers and the supplier of thousands of plants to over 100 garden centres in the region, we are well placed to advise you on any of your gardening questions. Please ask us for any help you need.

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Pacific  
NURSERIES

# How to... look after Pansies

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## Part 2: PANSY CARE

### How to get the best results from Pansies

#### Get off to a good start!

We strongly recommend that you use fresh compost. It is always tempting just to top up the pots where the summer bedding plants were but this really is false economy. Indeed it is likely that your Pansies will be in this compost for a longer period than the summer bedding. TIP: throw your old compost straight on to the borders and use it as a winter mulch around perennials. Pansies require a good Multi purpose compost with no added fertiliser at this stage.

#### Watering might sound obvious but this is the most common problem that gardeners face in the Autumn and winter months.

Plants will often dry out in cool, windy weather more than warm, still conditions and watering is often neglected when the cooler conditions prevail. It is best to water in the mornings as this will allow the water to dry off the leaf and flowers and this will prevent disease and rotting flowers. TIP: Remember that frosty conditions can also dehydrate the plants so keep checking. Do not over water in very cold weather as this may lead to excessive freezing of the roots.

#### Fertilising – Pansies do not require feeding until the spring time.

Too much fertiliser will force the plant and create too much leaf and not enough flower: "treat them mean in the autumn". When the plants start to come out of their winter months, a weak liquid feed can be used but, again, too much feed will be to the detriment of the flowers.

#### Problems – the two main pest problems are botrytis (white mould on the leaves) and attacks by greenfly in the spring.

Mould can be kept at bay by ensuring good ventilation around the plants and by not over watering. In the event of a problem, spray with a general purpose fungicide immediately. TIP: it is easier to prevent this than curing a badly infected plant so spraying before infection is recommended too.

Greenfly often emerge much earlier in the spring than we think and at this time there is often a shortage of nice sugary sap for them to enjoy. The Winter Pansies are often their favoured food source at this time. Frequently the first time that these are noticed is when the plant keels over in an exhausted and sap sucked state – it is too late for revival.

TIP:

Keep an eye out for these easily controlled bugs as soon as spring starts to "spring".



This is a 2-part  
guide to Pansies

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