

How to look after Clematis

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

Part 1: Growing your Clematis

Why buy Pacific Clematis?

Clematis, 'The Queen of Climbers', are perhaps the most rewarding of all climbing plants. There are over 300 species and many hundred hybrids. The majority are deciduous but there are a handful of evergreens. Clematis will grow happily in any good garden soil but do well in limey soil (NOTE most soil in our region may require some additional lime). Clematis also do well when grown in pots. We recommend the group 3 flowering variety, grown in a large pot with an obelisk or bamboo canes. These provide patio colour, height and make a bold statement.

Growing Instructions

Pacific Clematis have been grown in containers so, if reasonable care is taken they can be planted at any time. Try to plant your clematis at least 12-18" away from the wall or fence over which it will grow. The planting hole should be at least 18"x18" deep. Mix a generous amount of shrub planting compost and a handful of bonemeal with the excavated soil. After ensuring that the root ball has been thoroughly soaked, carefully remove the pot. Place in the hole so that the root ball rests 4" below the surface. This will encourage new shoots to form below the surface. Leave the supporting cane in place and lean it in the direction you wish the plant to grow. Backfill the soil and tread it firmly around the plant taking care not to tread directly on the root ball or damage the main stem. Water thoroughly.

Aftercare

Clematis grow best with their 'heads in the sun and their feet in the shade'! Sufficient shade at the roots can be achieved either by placing a large stone or slab over the roots or by planting a low growing evergreen shrub in front of the clematis. It may be several months before the plant is able to fend for itself, so in the meantime it is totally reliant on you to keep it well watered. The application of a general purpose fertiliser such as Miracle-Gro in the spring will help and regular feeding with Vitax Clematis food will help. Clematis climb by twining the leaf stems around a support, so trellis or wires are essential if grown against a fence or wall.



We recommend that your new Clematis should be cut back to 12" after the first flowering. Regardless of type this ensures much of the plants' energy is put to growing good, strong stems for future years.

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Part 2: Pruning your Clematis

Pruning is necessary to produce a healthy, well-proportioned plant that has flowers over the whole plant. If left unpruned, the lower shoots will become bare and the plant will become weakened. Pruning is divided into categories depending on the time of flowering and whether the flowers are produced on new or old shoots.

Summer Pruning (Group 1)

This applies to all clematis that finish flowering by June.

E.g. *C. montana*, *C. alpina*, *C. macropetala* and evergreen varieties. Pruning is not essential and should be done only to keep the desired size and spread, as soon as the flowers have finished.

Light annual Pruning (Group 2)

This applies to clematis that flower in May or June through to August, on shoots produced the previous year. Prune in Late February/early March, taking out dead, weak and diseased growth. Cut back to healthy pair of flowering buds.

Hard Pruning (Group 3)

This applies to clematis that flower on the current year's shoots.

E.g. *C. texensis* and *C. viticella*.

They are best pruned in late February/early March, as the sap is rising, to about 2 or 3 buds from the base.



Page 2 of our 2-part
care guide

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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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