
HYDRANGEA TIPS

BOILING WATER IS A SECRET FOR REVIVING CUT HYDRANGEAS.

To prevent your cut blooms from wilting prematurely, try this tip: Cut them early in the morning or late in the afternoon, and place the ends of each stem in boiling water for 30 seconds, making sure that the steam does not burn the flower head. Then, plunge the cuttings up to the flower head in cold water for 2 - 4 hours.

A bouquet of cut blooms can be easily rehydrated if you float them in a sink, bucket or tub filled with cool water for three to four hours. It also helps to [refresh your hydrangeas](#) this way every few days to make them last longer in a vase. Recut the bottom of the stem before soaking.

YOU CAN CHANGE HYDRANGEA COLOR.

The secret is in the soil, or more specifically, the soil's pH level. Adjusting the measure of acidity or alkalinity in the soil can influence the colour of your hydrangea blossoms. Acidic soils (pH 0 to 7) tend to deepen blue shades, while alkaline environments (pH 7 to 14) tend to brighten pinks.

If you want to try it for yourself, you can check the pH of your soil with a simple test kit available from your local nursery. To adjust the soil's pH (increase the acidity by adding peat moss and garden sulphur or coffee grounds, or increase the alkalinity by adding lime or eggshells). The colours won't change overnight, but when they do, it's like magic.

COFFEE GROUNDS - These Acid-loving plants benefit from adding coffee grounds to the soil. Scratch it in or use as a mulch..... Aster, Astilbe, Azalea, Basil, Bleeding Heart, Blueberry, Broccoli, Catnip, Camellia, Cauliflower, Eggplant, Evergreens, Fern, Fir, Gardenia, Garlic, Gourds, Heather, Hibiscus, Holly, Hostas (Plantation Lily), Huckleberry, **Hydrangea**, Lily-of-the-Valley, Lupine, Magnolia, Mahonia, Mountain Ash, Mountain Laurel, Oak, Pachysandra, Parsley, Phlox, Pieris, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Raspberry, Rhododendron, Rhubarb, Shallots, Spinach, Squash, Strawberry, Sweet Potatoes, White Mugwort, Witch Hazel, Wood sorrel.

JULY PRUNING - To keep your hydrangea bush to a reasonable size, prune back the tall non-flowering stems before the end of July. The stem will then produce two new stems that should mature before winter and become next year's blooms. Leaving it until fall to prune back will often result in no flowers next year.

Take tip cuttings from the pruned stems to grow plants for friends or plant sales. Cut a 6" - 8" length, remove lower leaves keeping the topmost 4 leaves. Clip those leaves in half. Dip cut end in #1 rooting hormone and set in a punched hole in a pot. Firm soil around cutting. Set pot in a semi-shaded area for rooting purposes. Protect from hot sun, don't let dry out. Within 2 - 4 weeks, each cutting should have roots emerging from base and sometimes also from the next node. At this point, cuttings could be placed in a 'nursery' area of the garden in semi shade to expand their root system. Make sure to label each one.

This year's **flowering** stems can be left for winter protection of the plant or pruned for shaping in the fall, but you probably won't get blooms on those stems next year.