

Camellia Care

One of the outstanding features of the camellia is that it blooms when few other plants do - in late fall, winter, or early spring. There are two types of camellias that are successfully grown in the Washington area. *Camellia japonica* has glossy green leaves, dense foliage, and large blooms from late winter through early spring. *Camellia sasanqua* are more open, have smaller evergreen leaves, and small, single blooms in the fall.

The best site for a camellia is in a partially shaded area that is protected from winter winds. A good location is beside a home or fence or under tall trees. They like soil that is slightly acidic, loose, and well-drained. Mix organic material, such as Bumper Crop, with the soil you are replacing in the hole when planting. A 2 to 3 inch layer of mulch is important to help the soil retain moisture and to protect the plant in winter. Remember to keep the mulch 3 to 6 inches away from the trunk of the plant.

Camellias generally are not fertilized the first year after planting, especially if you have added organic material. After the first year, apply an acidic fertilizer in the spring after blooming, followed by a second, light application in June. A slow-release form may also be used.

Only light pruning is required, usually to remove weak or dead branches, to control size or leggy growth, or to renew vigor of older plants. The best time to prune is after blooming and before new flower buds form.

Listed below are some of the camellias Johnson's carries:

Camellia japonica

Bette Sette - rose-pink
Blood of China - salmon red
Carter's Sunburst - striped pink
Greensboro Red - light red
Korean Fire - bright red
Kramer's Supreme - deep red
Lady Vansittart - white with red streaks
Les Marbury - pink and red
Magnoliaeflora - blush pink
Mansize - white
Taylor's Perfection - light pink

Camellia sasanqua

Autumn Delight and Autumn Moon - white
Bonanza - scarlet
Cleopatra - rose pink
Hana Jiman - pink edged white
Kanjiro - pink
Maiden's Blush - blush pink
Our Linda - lavender-pink
Setsugekka - white
Yuletide - bright red

Hybrids

Snow Flurry - white
William Lanier Hunt - medium red
Winter's Charm - lavender-pink
Winter's Dream and Winter's Interlude - pink

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