

Hydrangea Care

All hydrangeas prefer an acidic soil with lots of organic material, such as Bumper Crop. In the Washington area, they grow best in a partially shaded area. They should be fertilized in early spring before leaves emerge with a 10-10-10 fertilizer. Slow-release fertilizers are excellent.

Climbing hydrangea (*Hydrangea anomala subsp. petiolaris*) is a vine that attaches itself by aerial roots to brick, masonry, or wood. Flowers appear on the previous year's shoots. Once established, pruning should be kept to a minimum. To promote good flowering, deadhead all shoots that have flowered to a healthy bud.

Mophead or Lacecap hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) can be pruned at two different times: late summer or early spring. In late summer, prune as soon as the flowers have faded and strong shoots are developing from the lower parts of the stems and crown. Always try to keep several stems of old wood, with a sufficient number of new stems that will flower. Early spring pruning may result in the sacrificing of bloom for the season.

Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) should be pruned after flowering. Dead wood can be removed in early spring. Periodically remove a few of the oldest stems to the base to stimulate new growth and create a more dense habit.

PeeGee hydrangea (*Hydrangea paniculata*) has massive displays of large, white, panicle-shaped flowers in mid to late summer. Pruning involves removing dead flowers and annual corrective pruning of shoots. Thin the previous season's growth in late winter or early spring. Without regular pruning, this plant can become overgrown.

Smooth hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*) has huge white blooms in spring and summer. It can be pruned to the ground each winter or early spring because it flowers on new growth. Create a woody framework by removing some branches to the ground and cutting others at varying heights from 1 to 3 feet.

Johnson's carries many varieties of hydrangeas for your garden. The following is just a sampling:

Hydrangea arborescens - Annabelle

Hydrangea macrophylla - Big Daddy, Endless Summer, Nikko Blue, Penny Mac, Twist-n-Shout

Hydrangea paniculata - Limelight, Pinky Winky, Quick Fire

Hydrangea quercifolia - Pee Wee, Sike's Dwarf

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