



Falling for Hydrangea

Hydrangeas are popular shrubs in the landscape for their obvious beauty and many uses. Extended blooming of huge inflorescences brightens up any site in summer and adds interest to the fall landscape.

How to Grow Healthy Hydrangeas

The best soil for Hydrangeas is average to high fertility, humus rich, moist, and well drained. Most types prefer cool moist conditions, but Oakleaf types tolerate some drought when established and mulched. Some of the less hardy Hydrangeas tend to die-back in the winter like a perennial, but return in the spring and shoot up with vigor and large dark green leaves.

The Many Uses of Hydrangeas

Hydrangeas are great in any shrub or mixed border, and also excellent as a specimen. They can be showy small screens, stunning in groupings, or an interesting alternative to annuals or perennials in containers. The different species and selections of Hydrangeas offer a wide variety of sizes, shapes, flowers, and foliage.

Hydrangeas are also great for fresh or dried flower arrangements. The mop-head flower types are best for cut flowers. For long lasting fresh flowers, water the plant deeply the night before to keep petals from wilting when cut. For long lasting dried flowers, wait until the blooms start to change color in late summer.

Did you know?

Hot sun and excess wind can dry out Hydrangea flowers and turn them brown.

Hydrangea Flowers

Hydrangea blooms are large inflorescences made up of fertile flowers and showy sterile flowers. The flower types are referred to as mop-head, made up of almost all showy sterile flowers clustered in a globe or snowball shape, and lace-cap, a combination of sterile and fertile flowers, with the showy sterile flowers in loose ring around the fertile flowers.



Types of Hydrangea

Hydrangea arborescens - Smooth Hydrangea

Smooth Hydrangea flower on new growth, and are best if cut back to the ground in fall. This is the most shade tolerant of the hydrangea groups we offer. The straight species is native to IL, but several selections of the species are available with more showy flowers.

Hydrangea macrophylla- Bigleaf Hydrangea

Typical Bigleaf Hydrangea flower on old growth, but newer selections including Endless Summer® flower on new and old growth, providing like its name, endless summer flowers. Macrophylla types respond to soil pH, with blue flowers in acidic soil, and pink flowers in alkaline soil. To maintain good form, prune 1/3 of oldest growth when established.

Hydrangea paniculata- Panicle Hydrangea

Panicle Hydrangeas are the most adaptable of the Hydrangea groups, and prefer full sun for the best flowers. Little pruning is needed, but they can be cut to 12" to encourage vigorous growth.

Hydrangea quercifolia- Oakleaf Hydrangea

Oakleaf Hydrangeas are native to South East US, and have the best winter interest of the Hydrangea groups with persistent flowerheads and exfoliating cinnamon brown bark. Large oak-type leaves turn beautiful shades of red and purple in fall. Prune after flowering, to remove spent flowers and take out older growth.



McHenry County
Nursery, Inc.

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Name		Flowers	Shape	Fall Color	Mature Ht x Wd	Site	Soil	Zone
Hydrangea arborescens - Smooth Hydrangea	Annabelle	Green to White 8-12" Round	Broad Low-Rounded	Yellow to Tan	5' x 5'	Part Shade to Shade	Rich	3
	White Dome®	Lacy White Dome Shaped	Broad Low-Rounded	Yellow to Tan	5' x 5'	Part Shade to Shade	Rich	3
Hydrangea macrophylla - Bigleaf Hydrangea	Endless Summer®	Blue to Pink Long Lasting Mophead	Rounded	Bronze	5' x 5'	Full Sun	Moist	4
Hydrangea paniculata - Panicle Hydrangea	Pee Gee	White to Pink Up to 18"	Upright Rounded	Yellow Red	10' x 15'	Full Sun	Moist	4
	Limelight	Bright Chartreuse- Green to Pink	Upright	Green to Yellow	8' x 8'	Full Sun	Moist	4
	Tardiva	White 6" Panicles, Later Blooming	Upright	Green to Yellow	8' x 8'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	3
	Unique	Huge White Panicles	Upright Rounded	Green to Yellow	8' x 8'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	3
Hydrangea quercifolia - Oakleaf Hydrangea	Oakleaf	White to Purple to Tan, 4-12"	Upright	Orange to Reddish Purple	6' x 6'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	5
	Oakleaf Alice	White to Pink-Rose 12"	Upright	Burgundy Red	8' x 8'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	5
	Oakleaf Pee Wee	White to Pink-Rose	Dwarf Mounding	Wine Red to Purple	3' x 3'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	5
	Oakleaf Sike's Dwarf	White to Pink-Rose	Dwarf Upright	Burgundy Red to Purple	2.5' x 2.5'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	5
	Oakleaf Snow Queen	White to Pink-Rose Bold & Showy	Upright	Burgundy Red to Purple	6' x 7'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	5
	Oakleaf Snowflake	White to Pink-Rose 12-15"	Upright Broad	Burgundy Red to Purple	8' x 8'	Full Sun to Shade	Adaptable	5

