

General Maintenance

Survey the garden each spring. Press back into place plants that have heaved out during winter. Divide or replace plants that are weak or crowded and remove dead or diseased plants and plant parts as soon as they appear.

Watering

Most of these plants require moderate but thorough watering once each week to wet the soil to a depth of at least a foot.

Staking

This is necessary to support weak and floppy stems and to protect tall flower spikes from being bent or broken by strong winds. Dahlias, asters, delphiniums and others require tall, strong stakes of bamboo or steel. Peonies can be supported by large wire hoops surrounding the plants.

Never tie stalks tightly to stakes, which could crush their stems. Bare wire and small-diameter twine can cut stems. Instead, use soft waterproof tape, large-diameter binder or baler twine, or strips cut from discarded panty hose.

Renewal

Renew your gardens every several years to prevent perennial plants from becoming crowded and producing inferior blooms. You can renovate the gardens in spring or fall, but fall is usually preferable since you may have more time then and you can plant new bulbs during renovation.

Remove the perennials and work liberal quantities of compost or rotten manure into the bed, then divide the plants if necessary and reset them. Peonies, *Dicentra* (bleeding hearts) and Oriental poppies often do poorly if disturbed, so leave them in place during renovation.

Some perennials are comparatively short-lived.

Columbines, lupines, delphiniums and some *Linum* and *Daphne* often die out after several years. Others, like *Iris*, *Phlox*, and the hardy asters can live for many years. Lift and divide these every year or two to keep their blooms large and healthy.

Deadheading

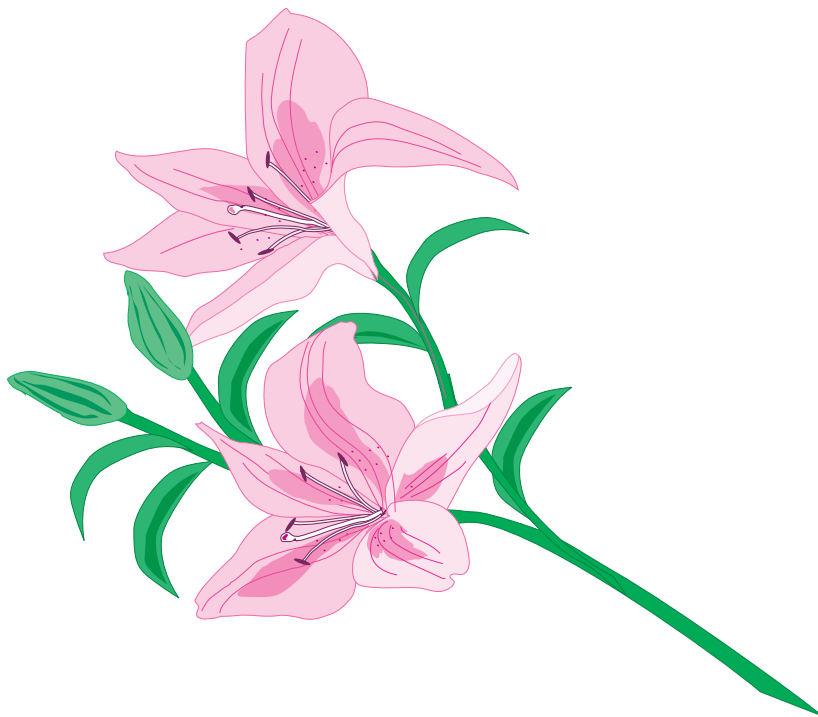
Removing the spent flower stalks (deadheading) from perennials tidies the garden and prevents the maturation of seed and allows the plant to shunt more food reserves into the crown and root areas for better growth next year. Deadhead your plants as the flowers begin to fade.

Fertility

Apply a complete fertilizer such as 8–8–8 or 5–10–10 as soon as spring growth begins at the rate of about 2 pounds per 100 square feet. Fertilize again in early summer. Do not apply fertilizer after late June since it can stimulate late vegetative growth that could cause the plant to enter the fall in an immature condition.

Several inches of partially rotted manure or compost, applied as a mulch over the plants in the fall when the topgrowth has died down, supplies some nutrients and adds valuable organic matter to the soil to improve plant growth. Do not apply manure or compost mulch to plants susceptible to crown rots. These are so noted in the following table.

Montana is not the easiest place to grow flowers, but with care you can have beautiful plantings in your yard. The chart on pp. 2–5 describes some perennial and biennial flowers that will grow fairly well under our conditions. Some species can be classed as either perennial or biennial depending upon soil fertility as well as genetics.



PERENNIALS AND BIENNIALS (arranged alphabetically by scientific name)

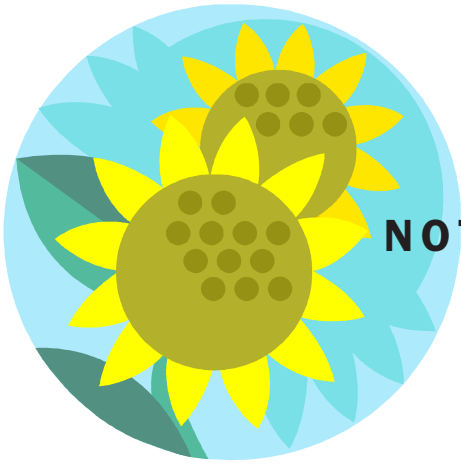
Plant	Color of bloom	Season in bloom	Height of plant	Season to plant	Remarks
Hollyhock (<i>Alcea</i> spp.)	Various	All summer	5 to 9 ft.	Spring	Thrive in any soil but do best in a rich, well-drained soil and sunny position. Usually biennial in habit. Plant seeds each spring. Pinch main stem early in the season for a shorter plant.
<i>Anemone hupehensis</i> 'Japonica'	Rose, pink, white	Fall	2 ft.	Transplant in early spring	Requires protection from wind and a deep, rich, moist soil, but well-drained location, especially for winter. Flourishes best when partly shaded from mid-day sun. Interplant with early flowering plants.
Columbine (<i>Aquilegia</i> spp.)	Various	June to Aug.	2 to 3 ft.	Sow seeds in spring. Transplant in Sept.	Hybrids can be increased by division of plants. Columbines thrive in average garden soil. They respond to top dressing of peat moss or rotted manure made in late fall or early spring. Partial shade desirable. A small leaf miner feeds within the leaves—burn infested foliage. Self-sows. Deer resistant.
Hardy Fall Aster Michaelmas Daisy (<i>Aster</i> spp.)	Purple, pink, lavender, rose, white	Fall	6 in. to 6 ft.	Transplant in early spring	Thrive in a wide range of soils but prefer a moist garden loam. Separate clumps every spring into divisions of 3 or 4 shoots each. Attracts birds and beneficial insects.
<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i> Common names include: Basket of Gold, Golden Tuft, Rock Madwort, Gold-Dust	Brilliant yellow	Late spring & early summer	10 in.	Plant seedlings in early spring	Full sun and well-drained soils preferred. Withstands dry conditions and is not particular about fertility. Commonly used in rock gardens. Desirable in the perennial border for its spring effect.
Canterbury Bells (<i>Campanula medium</i>)	Various	Early summer	2 ft.	Transplant in late summer	Biennial. Sow seed in early spring. Transplant in late summer. Medium-textured rich garden soil; plenty of moisture. Protect from mid-day sun. Can be invasive.
Painted Daisy or Pyrethrum Roseum (<i>Chrysanthemum-coccineum</i>)	Rose, pink, crimson, white	Early summer	1.5 to 2 ft	Sept.	May be started from seed sown in spring but it is better to increase by division of plants in fall to perpetuate color and form. Require well drained, moderately fertile soil. They thrive in full sun. Pinch.
Hardy Chrysanthemum (<i>C. x morifolium</i>)also called Florists' Chrysanthemum	Various	Late summer & fall	1.5 to 3 ft.	Replant in early spring	Propagated by division of old plants. Separate and replant well-rooted young shoots in early spring. Work well-rotted manure and phosphate into soil by spading deeply. In late fall, cut tops several inches above ground. Use tops, other coarse material for mulching. Pinch.
Shasta Daisy (<i>Chrysanthemum x superbum</i>)	White	July to Sept.	2 ft.	Transplant in early spring or Sept.	Good surface drainage as well as under-drainage is needed; otherwise plants may winterkill. Good garden loam with a good supply of organic material is needed for best growth. Addition of phosphate improves quality of the bloom. Pinch. Can be invasive.
Lily-of-the-Valley (<i>Convallaria majalis</i>)	White	Early summer	8 to 10 in.	Fall or early spring	Plant in a rich moist soil in shaded areas. Plants multiply rapidly and require lifting and thinning every two to three years. Top-dress with manure or compost in fall. Deer resistant.
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i> (Also <i>C. grandiflora</i>)	Yellow	All summer	2 ft.	Early spring or Sept.	Good for cut flowers and desirable for growing with shrubs. Deer resistant. Attracts butterflies and birds.

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Crocus (<i>Crocus</i> spp.)	Various	April & May	5 in.	Sept.	Can be grown on lawns and left undisturbed for several years. Set bulbs 3 in. apart and about 3 in. deep. They grow in various types of soils but prefer well-drained, sandy loam.
Dahlia (<i>Dahlia</i> spp.)	Various	Aug. to Oct.	3 to 6 ft.	May	Time planting so plants will emerge after spring frost. Plant tubers 6 in. deep. Each tuber should have at least one good sprout or bud. Cover tubers with 2 in. of soil to start. Replace rest of soil as growth starts. Destroy all dwarfed plants. Cut tops 6 in. above ground after first fall frost. Dig clumps of tubers about 2 weeks later. Store in cool, dark place. Cover with sawdust or peat moss to prevent drying and shrivelling during storage.
Delphinium or larkspur (<i>Delphinium</i> spp.)	Various	Early summer	3 to 6 ft.	Sow seeds as soon as mature or early spring. Transplant in late summer.	Grow in full sunlight. Prefer medium texture deep rich soil. Avoid the use of manure where leaf spot and stem rot is troublesome. The Siberian Larkspur is a smaller type, hardy and suitable for smaller gardens.
Sweet-William (<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>)	Various	Summer	1.5 ft.	Sow seeds in early spring, transplant early fall.	Prefers deep, rich, sandy soil but does well on heavier soils. Requires full sun.
Cottage Pink, Grass Pink, or Garden Pink (<i>Dianthus plumarius</i>)	Pink	Late June to Aug.	8 to 12 in.	Sow seeds in early spring. Transplant in late summer, early spring.	Use in the border or in rock gardens. Withstands drought but requires good drainage. Often very fragrant.
Bleeding Heart (<i>Dicentra spectabilis</i>)	Pink, white	Spring & summer	3 ft.	Spring	Prefers light shade but will tolerate partial or full shade. Will die back in very hot summers. Maintain moisture in soil while blooming. Deer resistant.
Foxglove (<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>)	Purple, white dappled	July to Aug.	3.5 to 5 ft.	Sow seeds in early spring.	An old-time biennial. Sow seed each spring, transplant in late summer. Will thrive in full sun or partial shade when planted in rich soil and given ample moisture.
Blanket flower (<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>)	Yellow	All summer	2 ft.	Early spring	Excellent for use in the border and for cut flowers. Adaptable to wide range of soil and climatic conditions. Attracts butterflies. Deer resistant.
Snowdrop (<i>Galanthus</i> spp.)	White	Early spring	5 in.	Early fall	Plant 3 in. deep in cool, moist, well-drained soil. They thrive in most locations but prefer the shelter of trees.
Prairie Smoke (<i>Geum</i> spp.)	White, orange, yellow, red	July & Aug.	1 ft.	Spring	Propagated by seeds, cuttings or division in late summer. Require plenty of moisture but need good drainage. Good for cut flowers but should be placed in warm water to avoid wilting.
Gladiolus (<i>Gladiolus</i> spp.)	Various	July to Oct.	3 to 5 ft.	May	Glads prefer an enriched, sandy loam soil. Apply 3 lbs. of 5-10-5 to each 100 feet of row. Place the fertilizer in narrow bands at about the same depth as the corms are planted and 1 to 2 in. away from them. Remove and burn old dry skins. Dig up and store corms indoors for winter.
Daylily (<i>Hemerocallis</i> spp.)	Orange, yellow	July & Aug.	3 ft.	Sept.	Succeeds under various conditions. Does well in the border or at the edge of shrubs. Does best in a rich soil and partial shade. Divide every two to three years.

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Blue Flax (<i>Linum perenne</i>)	Light blue	July & Aug.	1 ft.	Early fall	Very attractive in clumps among other perennials. Flowers borne on slender, erect stems. Avoid poorly drained and alkali soils.
Lupine (<i>Lupinus</i> spp.)	Blue, rose, white	July	2 to 3 ft.	Late summer	An old garden favorite. Requires medium fertile, well-drained soil. Young plants may be transplanted in early spring. Does well in full sun. Russell hybrids are a popular very ornamental group.
Daffodil (<i>Narcissus</i> spp.)	Yellow	May	8 to 10 in.	Aug.	Daffodil is the name given those narcissi which have prominent trumpets. All daffodils are narcissi, but not all narcissi are daffodils. Daffodils do not require rich soil, but benefit from small amounts of rotted manure worked into the soil at planting. Space 4 to 5 in. apart and plant 4 to 5 in. deep. Deer resistant.
Peony (<i>Paeonia</i> spp.)	Various	Late May & June	2.5 ft.	Early fall	Grow best in deep, fertile, moist, loam soil. Propagated by division of old plants. Set plants in Sept. with buds, or eyes, no deeper than 1-2" below soil surface. Spade soil deeply and mix fertilizer with soil below roots when transplanting. Manure applied over top of plant may cause root rot. An abundance of moisture is needed through bloom period. Cut flowers in early morning. Select buds partly open for cutting. Do not cut stem below first pair of leaves.
Oriental Poppy (<i>Papaver orientale</i>)	Pink & scarlet	July	2.5 ft.	Aug. & Sept.	Divide every 5 years. For spring planting, it is better to secure pot grown plants.
Iceland Poppy (<i>Papaver nudicaule</i>)	White & orange	July to Aug.	1 ft.	Sept.	Well adapted to rock gardens and thrives in rocky infertile soils. Requires full sun and well drained location. When grown in very fertile soil, it may become biennial.
Garden Phlox (<i>Phlox paniculata</i>)	Various	All summer	2 to 3 ft.	Spring	Propagated from seeds or by division of old plants. Divide plants every 3 or 4 years. Well drained neutral to slightly acid soil preferable. Yellowing foliage may be due to high soil pH or poor drainage. Pinch.
Primrose (<i>Primula polyantha</i>)	Various	June & July	6 in.	Summer	Divide plants in summer. A rock plant and good for border edging. Prefers shade.
Creeping Buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>)	Yellow	June	6 in.	Spring	Will adapt itself to shade, full sun or wet locations. Spreads rapidly and easily divided. May become a weed.
Black-Eyed Susan (<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>)	Yellow, orange	All summer	2 to 4 ft.	Spring	Tough and low maintenance. Upright, spreading plant does best in full sun or partial shade. Tolerates fairly heavy clay soils. Deer resistant.
Siberian Globe-flower (<i>Trollius asiaticus</i>)	Orange, yellow	Early	1.5 ft.	Sept.	Prefers a deep, cool, moist soil and partial shade. May be propagated from seed if sown immediately after they mature.
Tulip (<i>Tulipa</i> spp.)	Various	May & June	8 to 12 in.	Oct.	Choose a sunny location. Spade soil to a depth of 12 to 15 in. and work manure into lower 8 in. Space bulbs 4 to 6 in. apart and cover with 4 in. of soil.
Speedwell (<i>Veronica gentianoides</i>)	Blue	June	1.5 ft.	Sept.	Propagated by divisions or cuttings. Does best in good rich soils, in full sun. Spreads.



NOTES



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