

## Plant Resources

# Hydrangea Care Guide

There are three types of hydrangeas that grow in the Minnesota/Wisconsin region:

### SMOOTH



*Hydrangea arborescens*

Large, round flower heads.

### PANICLE



*Hydrangea paniculata*

Cone-shaped flower clusters (panicles).

### BIG LEAF



*Hydrangea macrophylla*

Globe-shaped or flat-topped flower clusters.

Visit our **YouTube** channel to [learn how to identify hydrangea!](#)

### TIP

Organic & natural planting soil for acid-loving plants is the idea mix to improve and revitalize plants that thrive in lower pH soils like hydrangeas. A formulation made of peat moss, compost and aged bark, is naturally lightweight and contains just the right ingredients to grow beautiful blossoms.




# Smooth & Panicle Hydrangeas


- **Blooms** on new wood, later than old wood varieties, beginning in midsummer and continuing until first frost.
- **Prune** in late winter or early spring before they begin to leaf out.
- They can be **cut back** close to the ground, but to encourage taller plants, cut back only 30 - 50% of the length of each stem.
- To alleviate **flopping**, cut the stems to a height of 18 - 24" to provide a sturdy framework to support new growth.
- New wood hydrangeas **set buds** the same year that they bloom.

# Big Leaf Hydrangeas


- **Blooms** on old wood in early summer and finishes by midsummer, though sporadic blooms may appear afterward.
- **Prune** in midsummer, just as the flowers begin to fade.
- Don't prune to the ground or you will remove all of next year's flower buds.
- Old wood hydrangeas form next year's flower buds in late summer or early fall.
- The **Endless Summer Series** blooms on old and new wood, giving endless blooms through the summer and into fall.
  - **Prune in May** to ensure the flower buds, that have made it through the winter, have emerged.

<b>Hydrangea Care</b>	
<b>Planting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give your hydrangea a year or two to establish its root system</li> <li>• New plantings are trying to produce a good root system to survive before blooms.</li> </ul>
<b>Sun</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panicle hydrangeas are the most sun-tolerant hydrangea and can take full sun.</li> <li>• Smooth hydrangea prefer part shade, but can tolerate more sun if kept well-watered.</li> <li>• Bigleaf prefer morning sun and afternoon shade. If you</li> <li>• If your hydrangea fails to bloom, it most likely needs more sun.</li> </ul>
<b>Condition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hydrangeas prefer moist locations, especially in the first 2 years of panting. Plant in an area that does not get too dry during a hot summer.</li> <li>• A 2-3" layer of mulch can help.</li> </ul>
<b>Fertilizer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a well-balanced liquid fertilizer, like a 10-10-10 once in May and again in June/July. Or choose a slow release fertilizer and use once in May.</li> </ul>
<b>Color</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All hydrangeas undergo some color change as their flowers age, but only bigleaf hydrangeas can change their color in a predictable controlled way.</li> <li>• A soil test is necessary to determine best course of action.</li> <li>• With a pH between 6 and 7, the blooms turn purple to blue pink.</li> <li>• To lower your pH, add garden sulfur or aluminum sulfate to the soil.</li> </ul>






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