

How to Care for Hydrangea

Here is some useful information on how to properly prune and take care of your hydrangeas. First, pruning depends on the type of hydrangea, and there are 3 types that grow in our region.



Bigleaf Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla
and Endless Summer series
Mophead-shaped flowers

- Blooms on old wood in early summer and finished by midsummer, though sporadic blooms may appear afterward.
- **Prune in midsummer, just as the flowers begin to fade.**
- Don't prune to the ground; doing so removes all next year's flower buds.
- Old wood hydrangeas form next year's flower buds in late summer or early fall.



Panicle Hydrangea

Hydrangea paniculata
Cone-shaped flowers

- Blooms on new wood, later than old wood varieties, beginning in midsummer and continuing until the 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 length of each stem.
- To alleviate flopping, cut the stems to a height of 18 - 24"



Smooth Hydrangea

Hydrangea arborescens
Large, round flowers

- Blooms on new wood, later than old wood varieties, beginning in midsummer and continuing until the 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 length of each stem.
- To alleviate flopping, cut the stems to a height of 18 to 24"

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Endless Summer Series blooms on old and new wood giving endless blooms through the summer and into fall. <p>Prune in May to ensure the flower buds, that have made it through the winter, have emerged.</p> <p>Available at Abrahamson: Blushing Bride (<i>pictured</i>) Summer Crush Twist-N-Shout Endless Summer™ Bloomstruck</p>	<p>to provide a sturdy framework for new growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wood hydrangeas set buds the same year that they bloom. <p>Available at Abrahamson: Bobo (<i>pictured</i>) Diamond Rouge Fire Light Limelight Little Lime Quick Fire Strawberry Sundae Vanilla Strawberry</p>	<p>to provide a sturdy framework to support new growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wood hydrangeas set buds the same year that they bloom. <p>Available at Abrahamson: Incrediball (<i>pictured</i>) Invincibelle Mini Mauvette Invincibelle Wee White</p>
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New: New plantings are trying to produce a good root system to survive before blooms. Give your Hydrangea a year or two to establish its root system.

Light: If you have a part sun or part shade, you could try Hydrangea Invincibelle, which tolerates more shade. If your Hydrangea fails to bloom and it does not receive 4 hours of sun, you may want to consider relocating it to a sunnier location. Panicle Hydrangeas are the most sun-tolerant and can take full sun.

Condition: Hydrangeas prefer moist locations, especially in the first 2 years of planting. Plant in an area that does not get too dry during a hot summer. A 2-3" layer of mulch is useful.

Fertilizer: 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.

Color: All Hydrangeas undergo some color change as their flowers age, but only Bigleaf Hydrangeas can change their color in a predictable controlled way. A soil test is necessary to determine best course of action. With a pH between 6 and 7, the blooms turn purple to bluish pink. To lower your pH, add garden sulfur or aluminum sulfate to the soil.