

Cutting Back Perennials

Trimming back herbaceous perennials in the autumn, after flowering finishes, can improve their appearance and future flowering. Evergreen perennials may also be trimmed and tidied, with dead foliage removed.

You can be selective with any cutting/tidying to retain some winter interest, and a habitat and source of food for wildlife. In the case of less hardy plants with woody stems, it's a good idea to delay pruning until spring, so that old stems provide as much winter/frost protection as possible.

Autumn Pruning

Cut stems close to the crown or dormant base of the plant. Cut above any young/new growth and take the opportunity to also remove any weeds.

Spring Pruning

Cut stems close to the crown or dormant top of the plant – avoiding new shoots/growth at the base of herbaceous plants. Cut old stems only at the base when new growth isn't branching off them.

Some early flowering perennials can be cut back after a first flush of flowers (also known as the 'Chelsea Cut!') to encourage a second flush later in the season. Consult advice if you're unsure whether this is right for yours.

Feeding Perennials

Your perennials will require a constant source of nutrients during the growing season.

After cutting back your perennials in Autumn, application of something like a blood and bonemeal feed is a good idea to help build and strengthen the perennial root system before winter. In early spring, a light mulch and feed with something like Growmore will help promote shoot and flower growth in addition to root building. It can be applied as a top dressing or as a base dressing, worked into the soil.

Further Information

Please note that this information is only intended as a guide – put together from our knowledge and experience.

It should be noted, that on occasion, a plant or tree can thrive in one situation but struggle under almost identical conditions. Like us, plants are living individuals – all different and unique. They should therefore be treated as such.

One of the best bits of advice we can give you however, is to have a look at your neighbour's garden and see what they are growing. You are likely to be able to enjoy the same in your own garden.

Top Tip...

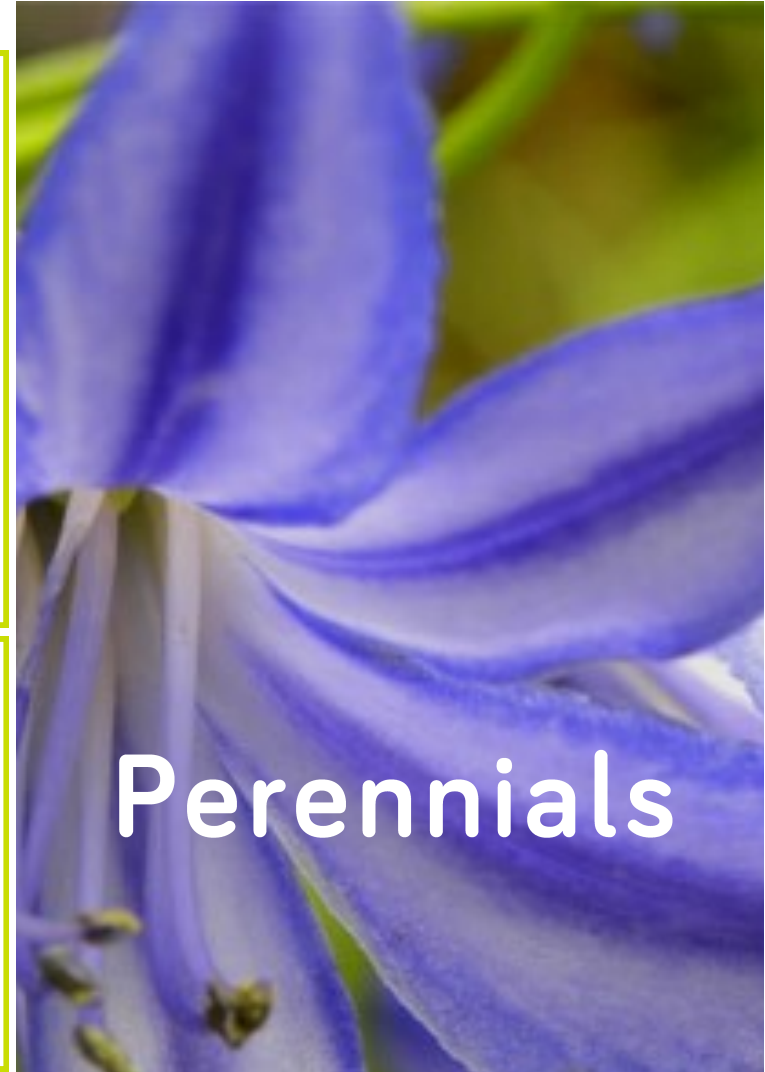
We all like our staple shrubs in the garden, but with many flowering for just a few weeks of the year, consider using them as an attractive (often green) backdrop to a display of spring and summer flowering perennials, many of which will bring colour to the landscape for a number months, rather than weeks. In addition, consider planting perennials in groups of at least three (five or seven if you can, and space permits). They often create a much more impressive display in groups.

For more information get in touch with us, and we'll do our best to help and advise you.



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Multiple seasons of colour

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Canna Valentine

Background

Perennials are generally ornamental plants that will survive multiple seasons of growth (contrary to annuals), living for many years, (often indefinitely) and bringing consistent interest and colour to the garden in beds, borders and pots, for many months of the year.

They cover an extremely broad spectrum of plants, but ultimately the behaviour of each will be similar – they will form flowering stems each year before seeding, and then die back in autumn, before sending up new growth the following spring.

We've split our wide range of perennials into 'sun', 'shade' and 'dry shade' varieties to help you pick the most suitable plants for the different areas in your garden – even those hard to fill spots where sunlight is lacking and water is sparse, such as under a tree or the eaves of a north facing wall.

Perennials

Sun Perennials

(plants for full or partial sun, ideally 6–8hrs + a day)

- Achillea
- Agapanthus
- Aristea
- Aster
- Campanula
- Canna
- Chrysanthemum
- Coreopsis
- Crocosmia
- Delphinium
- Dierama
- Doryanthes
- Echinacea
- Eryngium
- Geranium
- Gerbera
- Geum
- Gunnera
- Hedychium
- Helenium
- Heuchera
- Heuchrella
- Hibiscus
- Iris
- Kniphofia
- Leucanthemum
- Lobelia
- Lupin
- Meconopsis
- Penstemon
- Phlox
- Phygellus
- Primula
- Prunella
- Schizostylis
- Sedum
- Verbena
- Veronica

Shade Perennials

(plants for moist, shady sites)

- Acanthus mollis
- Aruncus
- Astilbe
- Astrantia
- Helleborus
- Hosta
- Ligularia
- Lysimachia
- Physostegia
- Polyanthus
- Rudbeckia

Dry Shade Perennials

(plants for drier, shady corners e.g. beneath trees)

- Alchemilla
- Anemone
- Bergenia
- Brunnera
- Digitalis (Foxgloves)
- Doronicum
- Euphorbia
- Pulmonaria

Using Perennials

Perennials will return each spring, for many years, providing interest in the garden for many months at a time. If they begin to look 'tired', they can usually be divided into smaller clumps and replanted, which will rejuvenate them for future years.

Deciduous varieties that die back after flowering can be cut back in the autumn or left until the spring. Evergreen varieties can also be cut back or tidied during spring and summer by removing dead foliage.

A wide mixture of colours, textures, heights and spreads, they can be amassed in a herbaceous border, a mixed border with shrubs, annuals and biennials, in containers and window boxes or as stand-alone specimens. Endless planting options await you.



Euphorbia Humpty Dumpty

Heuchera Ginger Ale

Anemone Queen Charlotte