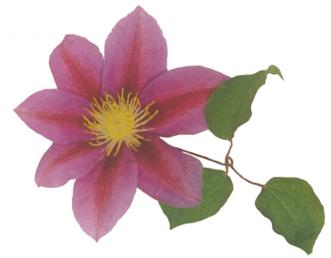


East Wind LANDSCAPE NURSERY

5614 State Rt. 19
Belmont, NY 14813
585-268-5535



CLEMATIS CULTURE

Container grown clematis can be planted anytime from spring through late summer as long as they receive frequent watering during dry spells. Soil must be cool; moist, but well drained; and rich. If planting against a masonry foundation, place the plant at least 12” from the wall, as soil tends to be very dry near building walls and under overhanging eaves. Bury the crown (the point where roots meet the stems) 3 to 4” below soil level. This will encourage new shoots to sprout from the base.

For best flowering, clematis should be positioned with their heads in the sun and their feet in the shade. Provide a position exposed to sun or only lightly dappled shade for at least six hours each day (pale flowered types prefer morning to afternoon sun which can fade their delicate colors). Shade the clematis roots with a 2 to 3” layer of organic mulch and/or a ground cover or low shrubs.

Clematis are heavy feeders so will benefit from an application of a balanced fertilizer (such as 12-12-12) once growth has begun in spring and again in early summer. Always make sure the soil is moist before fertilizing.

Clematis climb by wrapping their leaf stems (petioles) around anything within reach – a trellis, their own stems, or nearby shrub and tree branches. A thin membered support, which the petioles will readily grasp, is best. Fish line can be strung between the uprights of a heavier trellis to encourage twining. The height of the support should match the growth rate and pruning approach of the given species or cultivar. Smaller trellises are best suited to clematis that will be pruned hard annually (see Group 3).

The timing and severity of clematis pruning will vary based on the type of clematis you’re pruning and on your reasons for pruning. Of course, any clematis will benefit from an annual cleaning out of dead; weak, spindly wood; and very old wood which produces few or smaller flowers. You may also wish to reduce the size of a plant, curtail growth, enhance the form, or renovate a plant that is currently blooming only on the stem tips.

All young, newly planted clematis will become more vigorous and more attractive specimens if pruned hard for the first two years to promote development of strong root systems and multiple stems. Cut each stem back to one or two sets of buds, in spring, once the buds begin to swell and all danger of severe frost is past.

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Most clematis can be renovated by hard pruning at any time in their life (potentially 80 or more years) to reduce size, improve form, gain access to a building wall, etc. Drastic pruning should be carried out in spring, always cutting back to a set of healthy buds. Bloom will be sacrificed for that year on plants of Group 1 and possibly Group 2.

Clematis are divided into 3 Groups based upon their pruning requirements. Several references list species and cultivars by group, but if you don't know the name of your clematis, you can make an educated guess as to which group it falls under by observing the time of bloom and whether flowers appear on growth of the previous season's wood or the current season's wood.

Group 1 (Group A)

Clematis in this group bloom in spring from dormant flower buds on shoots produced during the previous season (old wood). These plants generally only require pruning to improve shape or restrict growth. Prune lightly immediately after flowering (no later than July). Keep in mind that new shoots that appear after pruning are the ones that will bear flowers the following season.

Group 2 (Group B)

This group consists of early blooming, large flowered cultivars which flower in late spring or early summer on the previous season's growth (old wood), and then again, sporadically through summer on the current season's shoots (new wood). Prune lightly in spring, removing 1 to 2' from the tips to tidy the plant, or prune a bit heavier, up to 1/3 of last year's growth, to curb the plant's size.

Group 3 (Group C)

Clematis in this group bloom in summer through early fall on the current season's growth (new wood) and are generally pruned more severely than others. If left to their own, they tend to grow leggy and produce flowers only at the final few feet of growth. Prune in spring, as soon as buds become visible. To maintain a small stature, leave only two or three sets of strong buds per stem. To gain a bit of height each year, yet keep the plant dense and prolific, prune annually to one or two sets of buds above the point pruned to the previous year.