

Botanus

Spring

Planting Guide

Thank you for Choosing Botanus!

Everyone at Botanus wishes you
a wonderful spring season and
all the wonderful joys of a budding spring garden!

The utmost care has been taken in processing your
order. We would ask that you check the contents of
your package immediately upon receipt
and notify us as soon as possible should you discover
any discrepancies or errors.

**Thank you again for your order and
Happy Gardening!**

BŌTANUS
CARE INSPIRE GROW

PO Box 3184 Langley BC V3A 4R5
www.botanus.com 1-800-672-3413

We have timed the shipment of your order to coordinate with spring planting for your particular climate zone. **We strongly recommend that you plant the contents of your order immediately upon receipt.** Due to unforeseen weather conditions, however, you may not be able to plant your items immediately upon receipt and if this is the case please proceed as follows:

1. Remove the contents of your package from its box and open the plastic packaging to allow for air circulation.
2. It is important that your plants and bulbs are stored in a cool, yet frost-free, dry place until they can be planted outdoors. Keep in mind, however, that if you store your bulbs and plants you are dealing with items that are perishable. If you have to store them before planting we highly recommend keeping this time to an absolute minimum!
3. If you are still unable to plant your items outdoors after approximately one week from receipt, we strongly recommend that you pot them up and continue to store them in a cool place until they are able to be transplanted outdoors. This will allow the root systems to begin development and will also allow you to get a jump-start on the growing season!

Your order may contain a mixture of both Spring Planting Bulbs and Bare Root Perennials. For more specific information about the pre-treatment of Bare Root Perennials and Roses please refer to Pgs 2-3.

Spring Planting Bulbs are relatively easy to plant and grow. When choosing your area to plant remember the first golden rule of bulbs: **good drainage is essential.** Bulbs will simply rot in wet, water retentive soil so it is best to choose an area that is rich in organic matter and well drained. Loosening the soil, working in organic matter to a depth of 30 cm / 12" and/or mixing in coarse sand will help create the ideal bed for your bulbs.

On each labeled package you will find vital zone rating information as well as sun exposure requirements for each variety of bulb and plant. Plant your bulbs, roots down, to the appropriate depth and spacing as indicated on the package labeling. With some bulbs it is difficult to tell which is the root end, so when in doubt plant them on their sides. You can either dig individual holes for each bulb or plant entire groups of bulbs in one large hole. There is no need to add fertilizer to the newly dug holes, however, a nice topdressing of organic fertilizer is always recommended for newly planted sites. Once your bulbs are in the ground and covered with soil be sure to water them well.

After your bulbs have bloomed in the summer it is absolutely essential that the foliage is allowed to die back naturally. This allows the bulbs to store enough energy to produce a flower the following summer season. Avoid the temptation to cut off yellowing foliage before it has completely died back.

Keep in mind that your Spring Planting Bulbs (with the exception of Lilies and some Unusuals) are not generally winter hardy and must be dug up in the fall and stored over the winter in a frost free area. To over-winter bulbs, dig them up in the fall when the leaves have yellowed and died. Allow them to dry in a shady spot for a couple of days, brushing off any remaining dirt. Store the bulbs dry, packed in either peat moss, vermiculite or in net bags and keep them in a cool, dry place.

In the case of container potted bulbs, gradually reduce watering once the leaves begin to yellow in the fall and store them right in their pots in a cool, dry place. Be sure to inspect your bulbs a couple of times during the winter season. If you discover a rotted section cut it away and dust the cuts with sulfur. Once spring arrives you can then re-pot or directly plant your bulbs in the garden being sure to wait until the last frost has past.

Choose a site in full sun to partial shade with light, evenly moist soil that contains rich organic matter. In zones colder than zone 6, it is recommended to start the corms indoors in pots and transfer the plants to the garden when the night temperatures reach at least 10 Celsius. Acidanthera will produce clusters of broad, grass like foliage and then in late summer and early fall will reward you with loose, showy spikes of very fragrant, funnel-shaped flowers.

ALOCASIA & COLOCASIA

Both Alocasia & Colocasia prefer partial to full shade and deep, rich soil that is wet or at least constantly moist. Choose a sheltered spot as wind can damage the large leaves. Ideally these plants thrive in a warm, humid environment and can be grown in containers that are set in a pond or water garden. In areas with shorter growing seasons we recommend starting the tubers indoors and moving them out once the weather is warm and settled. In areas with long growing seasons, plant them directly in the garden once the last frost has passed.

AMARYLLIS BELLADONNA

Plant in full sun to partial shade with deeply prepared, well drained soil. Choose a protected, warm site such as a south facing wall or grow them in containers that can be placed in a sunny spot. Amaryllis belladonna are relatively drought tolerant and are happiest when the summer is warm and dry so be sure that you do not over water them during the summer months.

ANEMONE

We recommend soaking your Anemone rhizomes overnight in room temperature water before planting. They will plump up after soaking and this will assist them in getting started in the garden. It is sometimes difficult to tell which end is up as their roots can be very tiny to distinguish. When in doubt simply plant them on their sides. Where zone tolerant, Anemones can be left in the ground and will naturalize well so be sure to plant them under trees and shrubs or among perennials for early season colour.

BARE ROOT PERENNIALS (INCLUDING FERNS, GRASSES & STRAWBERRIES)

Our perennials are shipped to you during their dormant phase as they are easily transplanted during this phase. Due to their outward appearance during dormancy, one might think they are unhealthy or dying plants that have no chance of survival. Nothing could be farther from the truth! The quality of the perennial lies in its roots and not in what appears above the soil level when they are dormant. Some varieties have thicker roots than others and cannot be judged by their root thickness alone. The quantity of roots in the root ball determines the quality of the perennial rather than the size of the individual roots.

Regardless of variety, for best results you should 're-hydrate' all Bare Root perennials before planting.

This can be done by allowing the roots to soak in room temperature water for approximately one hour before planting. When you plant perennials, make sure that the hole you dig is large. A rough rule of thumb is to make the hole at least three times as wide as the root, plug or pot. This allows the young developing roots to go out into well-aerated soil and find their way easily. If you have heavy clay soil, you should make the hole even larger as heavy clay is hard for new roots to penetrate. Add one shovel of compost to the soil that you use to fill the hole that you've dug.

As a general rule, most perennials should be planted with their crown approximately 2" – 5 cm below the soil surface. Plants sometimes benefit from the root being spread or fanned when transplanting. This will encourage new root growth. Once covered with the soil/compost mixture be sure to water your plants well. This soaking is one of the best tips for giving your Bare Root perennials a good start in the garden.

Ensuring that the roots are well covered and damp gives them a much better chance to become established and grow quickly. Maintain your plants by watering at least once a week for the first month. This weekly watering should be a heavy soaking, designed to get water right to the bottom of the roots.

Perennials do take some patience initially as it will take a year or two before they are fully established and blooming in your garden. Keep in mind the old adage when it comes to newly planted perennials: "First year sleeps, second year creeps, and third year leaps". But the reward of watching your lovely perennials bloom year after year is well worth the wait!

BARE ROOT ROSES

The most important rule to remember when dealing with your bare root roses is to **keep the roots moist at all times**.

Your bare root rose has been kept in cold storage until shipping and will need immediate attention upon arrival. Open the bag it came in and immerse the roots in water for 24 hours before potting or planting. This is a very important step because the roots will re-hydrate the canes and enable the new bud growth to develop successfully. For all roses, after soaking as instructed above, be **sure to plant as soon as possible never allowing the roots to dry out**. Most No.1 size roses can be planted in 3 gallon containers. Miniature roses should be potted in 2 – 3 gallon containers.

Roses need at least 6 hours of direct sunlight each day so choose a sunny spot where air can circulate and dry their leaves soon after a rain. Most rose plants consist of two parts: the rootstock and the flowering canes. The bulge where the parts join, called the graft union, should be planted just at or below ground level, depending on your climate. Where winter temperatures drop to –20 Celsius or colder, plant the graft union 6" – 15 cm deep and in warmer climates, place it just at or slightly above the soil surface. The hole you dig should be deep enough to set the graft union at the proper depth and at least wide enough to allow the roots to extend without bending.

If the rose is to be planted directly in the ground the soil should be prepared before planting. Roses prefer a heavy soil mix as mixes with too much peat tend to dry out too slowly in the spring and too quickly in the summer. We recommend a mixture of at least 50% loamy soil, 25% growers mix and 25% composted manure and add sand to your mix if your soil does not drain well.

To help stimulate growth, we suggest pruning the roots by removing approximately 1/4" - 0.63 cm off their tips. Partially fill the hole with the soil mix, making a cone or mound in the centre over which the roots should be draped. Adjust the height of the cone so that the graft union is at the right level, as determined using the guidelines above. Spread the roots evenly around the cone. Holding the rose at the right planting depth, fill the hole with soil, working it carefully around the roots. When the hole is nearly full, water thoroughly to settle the soil.

Finish filling the hole and create a low ring of soil around the perimeter of the hole. Water again. Apply a 3" – 8 cm layer of organic mulch in a circle around the plant, taking care to keep the mulch at least 4" – 10 cm away from the canes. Water as necessary to keep the soil evenly moist until the rose resumes vigorous growth. After your roses become dormant in the fall, protect them from severe freezing weather by piling a mound of soil over the canes. Climbing roses should be laid down and also covered for winter protection.

When you receive your Bearded Irises do not be concerned if the fans look yellow or dried out: this is normal. What's important is that the roots are in good condition and that there is a presence of new roots: small white bumps on the rhizomes.

A common mistake is to plant Bearded Irises too deep. They should be planted so that the tops of the rhizomes are exposed and the roots are spread out facing downward in the soil. Firm the soil around each rhizome and then water to help settle the soil. Generally speaking, Bearded Irises that are planted closer together will need to be thinned often and plants spaced further apart will need less frequent thinning. Bearded Irises are not too fussy about soil. All they require is **good drainage and lots of sun**. Planting on a slope or in raised beds helps ensure good drainage. If your soil is heavy, coarse sand or humus may be added to improve drainage. Newly set plants need moisture to establish their root systems so please soak the soil immediately after planting. Once established, Bearded Irises normally don't need to be watered except in arid areas. Over-watering is a common error and can lead to rot.

Important Note for Colder Zones 3-5: It is essential that your Bearded Irises be protected from the harsh winter climate. In the autumn we strongly suggest covering the entire rhizome with a thick layer of mulch. As soon as the snows begin to melt in the spring, you must remove this mulch layer thus exposing the top of the rhizome to the sun. If the mulch layer is left on top of the rhizome it will act as a sponge, retaining water and the rhizome could begin to rot.

BEGONIAS

Tuberous Begonias take a while to show growth and in order to get a jump start on the flowering season we recommend starting your tubers indoors and transplanting them to their containers once budding leaves form. To encourage earlier budding follow these steps: The most important requirement to start tubers into growth is excellent drainage - use a plain mix of 50/50 peat and coarse sand. Place the mix in containers or trays that are at least 2.5"/6 cm deep and place them directly on a heat source if available i.e. heating pad, top of fridge - if a heat source is not available place the containers in a warm, well-lit situation. Push the tubers into the prepared mix, bud side up (the rounded side is the root side!). Tubers should have at least 2"/5 cm of space all around to allow for good root growth and should then be thinly covered with additional mix to encourage them to grow roots over their whole surface. Check the mixture for moisture - it is most important to avoid over watering especially if bottom heat is lacking. Once the top growth has reached at least 3"/7 cm the tubers can be transferred to their planting container - it is important that this container also provide good drainage. Over watering should be avoided at this stage while growth is slow. Once outdoors and when they are actively growing keep them evenly moist.

BLUEBERRIES, HASKAPS & RASPBERRIES

Select a sunny location in well drained soil free of weeds and well worked. Work up a planting area approximately 2-1/2 feet in diameter and one foot deep. Remove 1/3 to 1/2 of the soil. Add an equal amount of pre-moistened peat moss and mix well. Blueberries, Haskaps and Raspberries can be planted as close as 2 1/2' - 76 cm apart to form solid hedgerows or spaced up to 6' - 1.8m apart and grown as individual specimens.

Remove from pot and lightly roughen up the outside surface of the root ball. Set the top soil line of the plant about 2" - 5 cm higher than the existing ground and firm around root ball. Mound soil up along sides of exposed root mass. Water well.

Blueberries, Haskaps and Raspberries do best with a 2-4" mulch over the roots to conserve moisture, prevent weeds and add organic matter. Blueberries prefer acidic mulch such as bark mulch, or sawdust and Raspberries prefer neutral mulch such as grass clippings, leaves, etc.

In colder zones we recommend beginning your Callas indoors and moving them to the garden after all the danger of frost has passed. Choose a spot in the garden that will give your Callas full sun to partial shade with rich, moist soil. If you can find a spot that is protected from the sun during the hottest part of the day this would be best. Plant them just under the soil surface on their sides if you are unable to tell the top from bottom. Water carefully until the plants are actively growing and then be sure to keep the soil evenly moist. Feed your container grown Callas every two weeks with a balanced fertilizer.

CANNA

Cannas thrive in full sun and prefer well-drained, evenly moist soil that is rich in organic matter. Cannas are susceptible to rot if the soil is constantly wet – especially if it is cold in the spring. Once planted, mulch, water regularly and feed them during the summer months. Deadheading will keep your plants looking neat and will encourage re-bloom.

CROCOSMIA

Crocoshmia do best in a full sun environment with evenly moist soil rich in organic matter. Where hardy they can be grown outdoors year round and they will eventually form dense clumps over time. Where these plants are not hardy choose a protected, warm site such as a south facing wall. Because it is best to avoid lifting the corms annually we suggest for areas where they are not hardy to plant them in containers and move the container to a frost free area during the winter months.

CYCLAMEN

Hardy Cyclamen like a spot that is in partial shade with well-drained, loose soil that has been supplemented with rich, organic matter. Once the leaves fade after the blooming season, mulch again with compost and especially in marginally hardy zones be sure to provide them with a winter mulch covering to protect them from freezing and thawing. Cyclamen tubers will grow larger and spread with each passing year.

DAHLIAS

Give your Dahlias a sunny spot with rich, well-drained, evenly moist soil. They do best with good air circulation but also need to be protected from the wind. If staking is required we suggest installing the stakes before planting as driving stakes into the ground at a later date may damage the underground tubers. Once they reach a height of approximately 2' – 0.6 m you can loosely bind the stalks to the stake. When stalks begin to appear pinch off all but two shoots to encourage branching and bushy growth. Mulch in summer and water regularly. Feed plants first after you have thinned the stems then again when the first buds appear and lastly about a month later. Deadheading encourages new flowers and for flower arrangements choose buds that are nearly open but still firm in the centre.

EUCOMIS

Eucomis are best grown in pots that can be placed in full sun and can be moved indoors during the winter months. They prefer rich, well-drained soil. Plant the bulbs with the tips just slightly below or just emerging from the soil surface. Water regularly and fertilize during the growing season. They will bloom mid July and the pineapple-shaped flowers will last for weeks. These plants are happiest when left undisturbed and will thrive for years without needing division.

Gladiolus do best in a sunny spot with light, evenly moist rich soil that has organic matter worked into it along with a balanced fertilizer. When planting your corms dig a trench and fill it as the plants grow. This deeper planting helps reduce the need to stake the plants, however, staking may still be necessary later in the season. Inter-planting with perennials or annuals also helps support the stems of your Gladiolus. If you are using your Gladiolus primarily for cut flowers, you may also wish to stagger the planting of your corms thus giving you a prolonged flowering period. The greatest enemy of the Gladiolus is the very tiny black gladiola thrip. Although thrips are tiny they can cause a lot of damage. Thrips lay eggs and puncture the foliage and flowers to feast on the juices. The results are brown foliage and deformed flowers. We suggest soaking your Gladiolus in a solution of 1 tbsp. of Lysol and 4 liters of water for 1/2 hour before planting. Plant the corms while still wet. During the growing season you can also use an organic foliage spray to control the thrip population. In a spray bottle combine 1 tsp dish detergent, 1 cup vegetable oil, 1 liter water and 1 cup rubbing alcohol. Shake vigorously to emulsify.

ISMENE

Ismene like a sunny spot that offers rich, evenly moist, well-drained soil. They are somewhat sensitive to cold so be sure to start them indoors and transfer outdoors once the last frost has passed. We suggest planting them in containers with the necks above the soil surface. Keep the soil evenly moist while they are actively growing. Feed your Ismene every other week with a diluted, balanced fertilizer.

IXIA

Ixia prefers a site in full sun with rich, well-drained soil. Where hardy they can be left outdoors year-round but in areas with wet winters a site with very well drained soil is essential. Where not winter hardy we suggest planting your Ixia in containers watering carefully until the plants begin to flower. Ideally the soil should be barely moist, never wet or completely dry. Continue to water the plants after they flower and feed them every other week with a diluted, balanced fertilizer.

LILIES

Always handle your Lily bulbs carefully as they are easily bruised and damaged. They also dry out quickly so be sure to plant them as soon as possible after receipt. Lilies thrive best in a spot with full sun and a rich, evenly moist, well-drained soil. They need plenty of soil moisture during the growing season but be careful to provide good drainage as they are extremely susceptible to rot. The old adage that Lilies like their heads in the sun and their feet in the shade is perfectly true so you should provide a spot that is over-planted with annuals, low growing perennials or protect them with mulch.

Once planted, Lilies will easily thrive from year to year with very little extra care. When new growth is visible in the spring feed your Lilies with an organic fertilizer to stimulate and promote growth. Taller Lilies may require staking and it is best to place your stakes earlier in the season so that the flower can be supported along its entire stem. Water regularly and deadhead as the flowers fade being careful not to disturb the foliage until it has naturally yellowed.

ONIONS (SETS)

Onions need a sunny, sheltered site in well-drained soil and best suited for growing in the open ground, but you could grow a short row or two in large, deep containers or raised beds. They are not suitable for grow bags. Plant onion sets 4"/10cm apart in rows. Gently push the sets into soft, well-worked soil so that the tip is just showing, and firm the soil around them.

Water if the weather is dry and occasionally feed with a liquid fertilizer. Mulching the soil will help conserve soil moisture and keep down the weeds. Stop watering and feeding once the onions have swollen, and remove any mulch or soil to expose the bulb to the sun. Remove any flower spikes as soon as they are seen. Onions can be harvested when the foliage turns yellow and starts to topple over.

Plant Nerines in free-draining soil and choose a spot where they can bake in the sun! After the leaves die down in early summer, keep them dry. When the first signs of emerging flowers appear in autumn, give them a thorough watering. Don't overdo it or the bulbs will produce a huge crop of leaves and very few flowers. If planted in pots bring them indoors when the first frost is forecast.

OXALIS

Oxalises grow in neat mounds of foliage topped by five-petaled flowers. *Oxalis deppei* is distinguishable from other varieties in that its petals close in the hot sun and open in the cooler parts of the day. Native to South America Oxalises are popular house plants but can also be left in the ground in Zones 6-10. Spreads easily with little care and can make an interesting ground cover!

POLIANTHES

Select a site in full sun with light, evenly moist soil rich in organic matter. Work a balanced fertilizer into the soil at planting time. In areas with shorter growing seasons, start them indoors in containers setting the containers on a warm surface (heat mat) to help speed their development. Once the last frost has passed set the plants outside either in their container or by sinking the container to the rim in the garden. Moisten the soil at planting time and then withhold water until foliage appears. Be careful – soil that is too wet rots the tubers unless the plants are actively growing. Once leaves appear water regularly and feed container grown plants every two weeks until the flowers begin to fade.

RANUNCULUS

We recommend soaking your Ranunculus in room temperature water for a couple of hours before planting. Plant the tubers with the 'claws' pointing downwards. Where hardy (zone 7-11) plant them outdoors in a rich, well-drained area that receives full sun. Elsewhere, plant in pots in the spring and over-winter them in a cold frame, green house or other frost-free area. Give them a bit of water when planted and continue to water sparingly until foliage appears. Once buds appear be sure to keep the soil

SEED POTATOES

Seed potatoes can be planted whole, or cut into pieces with at least one eye per piece. If you cut your seed potatoes into smaller pieces, cut them two days prior to planting. This allows the cuts to heal and prevents soil-borne diseases from infecting your potato crop. Plant your whole or cut seed potatoes two to three inches deep in the soil. Rows of potatoes should be about three feet apart and the potatoes within the row should be planted twelve inches apart.

Depending on the warmth of the soil, potato plants will begin to emerge from the soil one to three weeks after planting. When the plants are about a foot tall, use your hoe to mound six to eight inches of soil continuously along the entire row of plants. Once your potato plants have bloomed, you can begin to harvest small "new" potatoes. This is usually about eight weeks after planting. In the fall, after the foliage has begun to dry and die back, the entire crop can be dug.

Before storing them in a cool, dry and dark place, make sure the surface of your freshly dug potatoes have dried a bit. Spread them out in a dry spot out of direct sun, such as a garage or shed, for a day or two before putting them in storage.

SHRUBS

When planting flowering shrubs, choose the place in your yard where you will get the best benefit of the fragrant flowering shrubs. Some of the factors that you must consider in picking a site for your shrubs are how much sun the area in question gets per day, how well does the area drain water and is the area big enough to accommodate the growth of your shrubs. As with other bare root perennials and bare root roses, **we strongly suggest soaking your shrub roots for at least an hour before planting** in order to rehydrate the root system. Begin by digging a hole twice the size of the root-ball then fill the hole with water, let the water absorb into the soil and then line the hole with a mixture of soil and peat-moss. Peat moss will help retain moisture during the hotter months. Place shrub in prepared hole, fill in with soil and tamp down around the shrubs with your feet. This will help to prevent air-spaces that damage roots.