



# IRIS

## PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

**WHEN TO PLANT:** The best time is generally May through September. Early planting establishes plants before winter.

**WHERE TO PLANT:** A sunny, well-drained location with at least ½ day of sun is necessary. Iris will grow in any good neutral garden soil. Plant 18" to 24" apart.

**WATERING:** To help new plants get their root systems established, they should be kept consistently moist but never soggy. Established plants can tolerate some drought in mid-summer (a period of semi-dormance). Let the soil dry out to a depth of 1" to 2" between watering.

**FERTILIZER:** Do not use a high nitrogen fertilizer. Heavy fertilizing promotes soft growth that is apt to rot. To prepare new iris bed, spade in a good application of compost. A light application of balanced fertilizer as a top dressing around the plants a month after bloom and in early spring or very late fall is desirable. Steamed bone meal or super phosphate are fine top dressing materials.

**GROOMING:** It is not recommended to cut the green iris leaves since plant food is stored there. Keep your Iris beds free of weeds and debris, allowing the rhizomes to bask in the sun. However, old or diseased leaves should be removed. Old flower stalks should be cut off next to the rhizome.

**TRANSPLANTING:** Iris need to be thinned or divided before they become overcrowded, usually every 3 – 4 years. If Iris are allowed to become too crowded, the bloom will suffer; some varieties may crowd others out and disease problems will increase. Dig the entire clump out of the ground. Wash soil off the roots and separate the rhizomes by cutting at the intersection points with a knife and trim the leaves into a fan shape about 6" long. Discard all rhizomes without leaves. Replant each rhizome by pressing the soil down around the rhizome until the top of the rhizome is just below the surface.

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