

Add Bulbs to the Landscape Now for Big Color in the Spring

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Bulbs are a good addition to any landscape or garden because they offer a variety of bloom color, flowering time, plant height and shape. From the end of September to the first of November is the time to plant spring flowering bulbs. Spend some time thinking about the location you intend to plant before making a purchase. So many times we buy on impulse and then have to really squeeze plants into a spot that may be less than desirable!

Bulbs can be planted in a variety of locations including around house foundations, under deciduous shrubs and trees, along borders, in perennial beds and rock gardens, in containers and even on steep slopes.

When planted along a foundation, bulbs will add color in the early spring if planted in a grouping of twelve or more bulbs. If you have evergreen shrubs planted along a foundation, they will provide a nice background for planting of bulbs. Bulbs will “pop” with color in contrast to the green of the shrubs.

Spring bulbs can be planted under deciduous shrubs or small trees. You may be wondering how this can be because of a lack of sunlight. Early blooming bulbs receive plenty of light because they start growing long before trees and shrubs start to develop leaves. Some bulbs that do well in this type of setting include grape hyacinths, crocus, bluebells and early maturing daffodils.

A border of bulbs planted along the edge of the lawn will add a splash of color to the lawn area. Or consider planting low growing bulbs around the edge of a flower bed to add interest. You can add them directly into a perennial bed and the bulbs will bloom in March, April and May before perennials start to grow. Make sure to locate the bulbs so the dying foliage will not be noticed.

For steep slopes that are difficult to mow and maintain, bulbs with a fibrous root system such as daylilies, are an effective plant to use. The foliage is attractive and the bloom adds color to the area. The problem of trying to mow a steep area will be eliminated.

Both spring and summer bulbs can be planted in portable containers. The nice thing about container plantings is their versatility. For spring bulbs, once bloom is past, the container can be moved to a location out of sight while the foliage matures. Summer bulbs will add color all summer long to areas such as a patio or deck.

Keep in mind that planting bulbs of one variety or color in mass will have greater visual impact. This will provide uniform color and texture that is pleasing to the eye. With bulbs such as tulips or daffodils, plant at least twelve bulbs of one variety in a grouping. Smaller bulbs should be planted in groups of fifty to have visual impact.

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