



Growing Dahlias

In the Northeast, we can count ourselves lucky that dahlias grow from tubers. Since our climate isn't temperate enough to leave dahlias in the ground through winter, we can still enjoy them with just a little added care. Planted in the spring after the last hard frost, dahlias bloom at mid-summer. You can get a jump on the season by planting the tubers up in containers first even if you're transferring them into the ground later. Late March would be the time to plant up in containers.

Dahlias Step by Step

In the Spring:

- Start by selecting tubers in the early spring. There are many varieties so this task may take a bit of time!
- Pick a spot. Dahlias like well-draining soil and lots of sun. Do you have a place that could use a blast of color? I can always find a few! If you chose a large flowered dahlia, make sure it will have room. The foliage can very quickly reach 3-4'.
- Loosen the soil well when digging the hole for dahlia tubers. Mix in some nice compost and if you're planting in clay, you'll want to add some peat moss. Mix in some Espoma Flower-Tone while you're planting.
- Follow the package instructions for depth and put tubers into the ground point down. Cover with soil and water in.
- For larger fast growing plants, stakes can be essential. Staking is easy! Just put a stake or two in when you plant your tubers and use some twine to attach when the plants are larger.

In the Summer:

- Look for your dahlias to begin flowering in mid-summer and continue blooming up until frost.
- Dahlias love food. They'll need extra energy to continue making bigger tubers. Espoma's Flower-Tone is the best choice. Swan Island Dahlias, one of the largest dahlia growers in the

country, recommends it! After feeding at the time of planting, feed again within a month, then 3 weeks after that.

- Dahlias make wonderful cut flowers. Don't worry about cutting off a stem; the buds will keep coming until frost.

In the fall:

- After a killing frost, you'll see that dahlia plants have died. Simply pull the plant out of the ground, cut the dead foliage off to 2" or 3", wash off the tubers and dry them in a sunny window.
- Toss tubers into a paper bag with some peat moss or sawdust and store where it's cool, but doesn't freeze.
- Next spring simply replant and once again be thrilled with your dahlias.