

# Gladiolus Growing Information

## Love Them or Hate Them

Gardeners tend to have a love/hate relationship with gladiolus; very few people sit on the fence. If you're reading this, you probably appreciate the intricate beauty of these dramatic flowers and enjoy the vast color selection.

Gladiolus hybridizing is a hot area in the horticulture world right now, with breathtaking results. The outstanding choices are popping up so fast we're having trouble keeping up with good photographs but can't wait to grow dozens of varieties this summer for just that purpose. No longer the predictable flowers your grandmother grew, glads have morphed into stylish contributors for both gardens and bouquets. Here's to experimenting with zippy new choices!

## Outdoor Beds

1. Find a location where the soil drains well. If there are still water puddles 5-6 hours after a hard rain, scout out another site. Or amend the soil with the addition of organic material to raise the level 2"-3" to improve the drainage. Peat moss, compost, ground bark or decomposed manure all work well and are widely available. Gladiolus will not survive in standing water.
2. Site your glads where they will receive full sun.
3. Dig holes and plant the corms 6"-7" deep and about 6"-8" apart. While glads may be planted more shallowly, bigger bulbs perform better with deep planting and the extra soil around the base of the flower stalks helps support the tall flower-laden stems. Plant the bulbs with the flattened side down and the growing point facing up.
4. Most growers plant glads at two-week intervals to extend the blooming season. Because glads have a tall slim profile groupings of a dozen or more are most impactful.
5. After planting, water your glads generously, soaking the soil. Roots and sprouts will form shortly although it sometimes takes a little while for the shoots to appear when the corms are planted deeply. (If the soil is still quite cool in your area, wait until it warms before planting.)
6. When in bloom, feel free to cut glad stems for bouquets. If you want to include foliage in your arrangements cut sparingly as these leaves are needed to nourish the bulb for next year's show.
7. After blooming has finished for the season leave the foliage in place; don't cut it off. The leaves will gather sunlight, create food through photosynthesis and strengthen the bulb for the future. Water as needed. Leaves and stalks may be removed when they yellow. (If you live in an area where your glads aren't winter hardy, dig the corms after the first frost, dry for a few days and then store in a cool place in paper bags or cardboard boxes filled with peat moss.)
8. Your glads will rest for a few months before beginning the next growing cycle.

## Pots, Tubs & Urns

1. Fill your containers with good quality, well-drained soil. Almost any commercially available potting medium will work fine. Make sure there are adequate drainage holes; glad corms must never sit in waterlogged soil or they will rot. Keep in mind the mature size of the varieties you have chosen and plan your container sizes accordingly. Typically the border and orchid (nanus) glads are better suited size wise to containers than are the tall varieties.
2. Site containers where they will receive full sun.
3. Dig holes and plant the corms 6"-7" deep and about 6" apart. While glads can be planted more shallowly, bigger bulbs perform better with deep planting and the extra soil around the base of

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