



Fuchsias

Fuchsias are quite easy to grow. In baskets or planters they provide colour in sheltered areas from May until October. They are available in 2 inch pots, or as larger plants in baskets. When planting your fuchsia baskets, use four 2 inch potted plants, or two 4 inch plants per basket. Use a good quality planting soil containing peat, manure, and sand such as planter box container mix.

Watering

Watering is critical for fuchsias. In early cool weather, plants may not need watering for a week or more at a time. Heavy watering of small plants during cool weather will result in root rot, this can happen quite rapidly and can easily kill your plants. In warmer weather, however, larger baskets may need watering one or more times a day. Check the soil daily and water after the top inch of the soil is dry.

Fertilizing

Fertilization is very important for good flower production. We recommend the application of a good quality liquid fertilizer once every two weeks when plants are young and once a week for mature plants. When plants have reached a nice size and are blooming, we recommend alternate applications of Miracle Grow Ultra Bloom (15-30-15) one week and fish fertilizer the next week. Remember to pinch back your plants occasionally to keep them bushy, and pick off the seed pods and stem, (they resemble small black cherries) as they inhibit flower production.

Pests

Spraying is necessary to control insects such as aphids and whiteflies. Use an insecticide such as Safer's Rose and Flower Insecticide. If mildew or fungus becomes a problem use Safer's Defender Garden Fungicide.

Exposure

Exposure for fuchsias is IMPORTANT. Most varieties need protection from afternoon sun from 12 – 6 pm; morning sun is ideal, also avoid placing your fuchsias in a windy exposure. Before putting your fuchsias out make sure that all danger of frost has past. Make sure that they have been hardened off before you plant them outside. To harden off your fuchsias put them outside during the day and bring them in at night, or leave them in a protected area, such as a carport or covered patio.

Overwintering

Overwintering fuchsias is difficult without a greenhouse, however here are some ideas.

The most important thing is to keep them as cool as possible without freezing. A fruit cellar is ideal but anywhere that the temperature will stay between 2 C to 7 C is okay.

It is important to maintain adequate moisture levels. More fuchsias die from dryness and freezing, especially when stored in garages or under the house. Fuchsias should be trimmed back to about 8 – 10 inches after their leaves have fallen in the fall and dusted with sulphur dust. If an unheated garage or crawl space under a house is unavailable, dig a pit or build a wood bin big enough to hold all your fuchsias. Protect them from rain and direct frost and cover the baskets with leaves, straw or any coarse light material. Fuchsias may be removed from baskets and root ball wrapped with damp paper. Remove them from the pit as soon as weather moderates in March.

In late February or early March place baskets in a warm, light place, approximately 10 C and begin to fertilize after growth begins. Be careful not to over water in the beginning and check for insects and disease which thrive in the warmer environment. Pinch back after the fuchsias have grown about 4 – 6 inches and place outside after danger of frost is past.

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