

HOW TO GROW AND CARE FOR IRIS

Iris are arguably the most beautiful of all blooming perennials, they are shining stars both in the garden and in cut floral arrangements.

Planting Iris should be done in late summer, July, August or September, in an area that receives half a day of full sun; Iris can tolerate partial shade, but perform best in full sun.

Soil preparation is very important, as Iris prefer well-drained, organically rich soil with a pH +/- 6.8; while Iris will tolerate some variance we do recommend you have your soil tested, most local nurseries and garden centers can provide this service at a nominal price.

Actual planting is quite simple; allow approximately twelve inches of space between plants, plant the rhizome with the top exposed and the roots spread outward and down into the soil, firmly pack the soil around each rhizome and water to settle.

Consistent watering is important to help newly planted Iris establish their root systems; remember, deep watering every three days is much more effective than short watering every day.

Fertilization depends upon your soil type, generally a balanced 6-10-10 fertilizer, bone meal or superphosphate should be applied lightly in early Spring and about one month after bloom.

Iris borers are a common problem in the Midwest and along the East coast; to combat them, preventative applications of Cygon 2-E should be applied at two week intervals from early Spring through mid-Summer. An effective organic alternative is a 10% solution of Murphy's Oil Soap.

Leaf spot, powdery mildew and rust can be easily controlled with regular applications of a fungicide, such as: Daconil, Funginex, Mancozeb or Captan. effective organic alternatives include a 20% solution of Lemon juice or a 20% solution of white vinegar.

Beyond their beauty, Iris multiply and can be divided every three to four years