GROWING DAHLIAS

Plant Dahlia tubers in the spring, after all danger of frost has passed. For earlier blooms, they can be started in containers indoors and transplanted outside when the weather warms. It takes about 8 weeks from planting to blooming.

Tubers should be planted 6 inches deep with the 'eyes' facing up; space tubers 1-2 feet apart, depending on variety. Dahlias prefer full sun (at least 6 hours) and some protection from the wind for the taller varieties. Water in lightly, then do not water again until they have sprouted. Overwatering will cause the tubers to rot.

Deadhead spent flowers to encourage more blooms.

Dahlia's are a tender perennial, meaning they will likely not survive over-wintering outdoors in our climate.

To save the tubers, dig them up after the first fall frost, cutting the stalk to about 2 inches above the ground. Allow the tubers to dry in the sun for a day or two, then store them in vermiculite or dry sand, in a cool basement or similar location. They prefer low humidity and temperatures between 35-45 degrees.

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