



# Amaryllis Care

Plant an amaryllis bulb so that the neck of the bulb is exposed. Water the bulb thoroughly after planting and put it in a bright, warm (68-70 degree F) room. Allow the soil to dry between waterings before it really begins to grow, because too much moisture before the bulb is actively growing can cause it to rot. As the roots begin to develop and fill the container, the soil will dry out more quickly and more frequent watering is necessary.

Keep amaryllis away from cold drafts and hot spots. Once top growth begins, move the pot to a sunny window. Flowers should appear 7-10 weeks after planting. Rotate the plant every day or two to prevent it from leaning toward the light. If the plant gets top-heavy, gently tie the stem to a bamboo stake or similar support.

To extend its life, remove the long pollen-bearing stamens inside the flower with tweezers. Once the flowers are finished, cut the flower stalk off with a sharp knife several inches above the bulb, but do not remove any leaves.

After cutting off the flower stalk keep the amaryllis in a bright location - a south or west window - and keep the soil moist. It's also a good idea to fertilize it once a month using a fertilizer suitable for houseplants. The goal is to keep the plant growing well, in order to build up enough energy for next year's flowers. Water the plant regularly and continue fertilizing through summer.

In August, stop watering the plant and allow the leaves to dry off naturally. This starts a resting or dormant stage that the bulb needs in order to flower again. After about two months, remove the dead, dried leaves and roots from the bulb and re-pot it in a clean pot and new soil. Water thoroughly and place the pot in a warm, sunny window. If you've done everything properly and according to schedule, you should see new growth soon, starting the whole cycle over again.