

Getting Started

Choose a container that is suitable for your area. Take into consideration the size, shape and color of the container. Generally, the larger the container, the easier it is to keep your plants watered. A container at least 12" in diameter and 10" deep should last through the season.

Use fresh high quality potting soil. It is important to change the soil in your planters each year to get rid of any overwintering disease, insects or weeds. If you are re-using containers, scrub them with a 1:10 solution of bleach and water and let them air dry. For very large containers, remove the top 6 to 12 inches of soil and replenish with new potting soil.

Use a transplant fertilizer. Get your plants off to the right start! Al's 4-3-3 Transplanting Fertilizer will give your plants the boost they need to prevent transplant shock and start them thriving.

Choose plants that require the same growing conditions. Combine plants that need the same amount of light (sun or shade) and the same watering requirements (moist or dry).

Ready to Plant

1. Pour your potting soil into your container or basket until it is at a level where the plants can be placed on top and there is still a one inch lip at the top of the container or basket. It is better to add less soil and fill in than to add too much and try to "dig your way out."
2. Add your transplant fertilizer and mix well. Follow the instructions on the fertilizer container for exact measurements.
3. Place your plants in the container or basket. For consistency and an appealing look, always place your upright plants in the center or back of the container, clumping plants next and trailing plants toward the edge. If you are using two or more of the same plant in your basket, place them opposite each other to create a balanced look on all sides.
4. Fill in around the plants with extra soil. It is important to fill in around the plants to cover any exposed roots. Just be sure to leave a one inch deep lip around the top of the basket to allow a place for the water to sit as it is absorbed into the soil.

Growing it on...Continued Care

Remember to water this summer. Water until water runs through to the bottom of the pot. When in doubt, feel 2" into soil, and if it is dry, water the plants; if it is moist, leave it alone. Fertilize throughout the summer and fall. The more you fertilize, the more sensational your plants will be. Use Al's Slow Release 10-4-8 Fertilizer every two months and use Al's 17-5-17 Water Soluble Fertilizer once a week.

Pests

Your beautiful blooms are edible delights to many pests. If your Petunia, Million Bells or Geranium blooms are suddenly missing this could be the work of the budworm. Prevent budworm damage by spraying your foliage with Captain Jack's Dead Bug Brew (Spinosad) in early June and continue every two to three weeks to avoid these pests. If you see damage from budworm, even after preventive spraying, spray every 10 days or as stated on the label. For other "flying" pests, use Bayer's Dual Action Rose & Flower Insect Killer.