

## Contact details

Winter pruning is carried out in July. All stems that produced flowers the previous summer should be cut right back to the 2nd bud above the ground. Remove all dead, old or spindly, weak growth. Strong stems that have not yet bloomed must be left well alone as these produce the blooms for the coming season. The whole object of this pruning is to allow the plant to devote all its energies into these dormant flower buds.

## Pests and Diseases

- Powdery mildew - a white fungus on the upper surface of leaves - spray with Margaret Roberts Organic Fungicide.
- Red Spider Mite - minute, eight legged mite on underside of leaves causing leaves to turn silver-grey and later brown. Spray with Margaret Roberts Organic Insecticide.
- Chewing insects - beetles, caterpillars and grasshoppers - treat with Margaret Roberts Organic Insecticide.
- Chlorosis - yellowing of leaves with prominent green veins. Apply Iron Chelate at recommended dosage, or foliar feed with Wondersol All Purpose every second week.

**For more information, visit any of our Info centres or email us at [info@gardenshop.co.za](mailto:info@gardenshop.co.za)**

For details and further information, visit GardenShop's friendly Information Centre at any of our branches or call our Contact Centre on 0861 G-A-R-D-E-N (427336). Alternatively, e-mail us at [info@gardenshop.co.za](mailto:info@gardenshop.co.za) or log on to [gardenshop.co.za](http://gardenshop.co.za).

### GardenShop Broadacres

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### GardenShop Bryanston

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### GardenShop Edenvale

Stoneridge Shopping Centre  
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Co-ordinates 26° 06' 56.88" S / 28° 08' 42.73" E

### GardenShop FloraFarm

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Co-ordinates 26° 10' 42.95" S / 28° 15' 12.04" E

### GardenShop Menlo Park

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### GardenShop Parktown North

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# Hydrangeas

GardenShop's guide to the planting and care of Hydrangeas

## An introduction to Hydrangeas

Hydrangeas are amongst the most popular flowering shrubs in South African gardens. They grow well in most regions from the coastal areas to the drier hinterland. Hydrangeas, commonly referred to as Christmas roses, often dominate the landscape through the heat of summer with their showy, colourful flowers and are very rewarding and easy to grow if you follow a few simple rules.

## Position

Hydrangeas grow best in a lightly shaded position with plenty of water, south facing slopes are ideal. They enjoy rich, loamy soil with plenty of compost, leaf mould and kraal manure. Protect them from prevailing salt laden winds in coastal areas. In cold areas, soft new growth tips require protection from late frosts.

## Garden Uses

Mass plant under trees in large gardens or plant amongst other shade loving shrubs in flowerbeds. Use Hydrangeas in pots and containers on shaded patios or as indoor, flowering displays in brightly lit rooms. They should be planted outdoors when flowers start to fade. The flowers are spectacular in flower arrangements, either fresh or dried.

## Planting and Care

Dig holes approximately 600mm square and 450mm deep - rather wide, than deep as Hydrangeas have a shallow root system.

Mix 1/3 part compost to 2/3 parts topsoil from the hole, mix well with 250 grams Superphosphate then return this prepared mixture to the planting hole, firming down all the time.

Now dig a small hole, large enough to accommodate the root ball of the plant and carefully remove pot or nursery container. Soak root ball well before placing in hole. Do not bury any deeper than the level of the root ball. Fill in soil and firm down well.

Water thoroughly with at least 20 litres of water. Thereafter keep plant moist at all times from spring to autumn. Mulch with compost or leaf mould to keep roots cool and to conserve moisture. This greatly reduces watering needs.

## Feeding or Fertilising

Hydrangeas are greedy plants and require regular fertiliser applications. Apply Wonder 3:1:5 (26) slow release nitrogen fertiliser at two monthly intervals at the recommended application rate. Supplementary foliar feeding with Wonder Colourburst Azalea plantfood,

alternating with Nitrosol at 2 to 3 week intervals prior to, and during flowering improves flower quality.

The colour of blooms change according to the acidity of the soil that the plants are growing in. This can be altered by treating in the following manner:

Pink or red flowers are usually associated with alkaline or sweet soil conditions. Add 500 grams of Agricultural Lime to soil mixture at time of planting. Thereafter dress with lime every August at a rate of between 250 and 500 grams per plant. Fertilise with Shake 'n Grow Pink Hydrangea PlantFood.

Blue or purple flowers require acidic soil conditions which can be achieved by regular applications of Shake 'n Grow Blue Hydrangea PlantFood.

Note that it is easier to maintain colour intensity on plants growing in pots.

## Pruning

Pruning is essential to induce large, healthy blooms. Immediately after flowering (December, January) prune lightly by removing all dead or spent flower heads. Cut back by about 200mm to just above a strong double bud.