

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE BEARDED IRIS CARE

## FROM THE EXPERTS AT ALLISONVILLE NURSERY



11405 ALLISONVILLE ROAD  
FISHERS, IN 46038 317-849-4490  
WWW.ALLISONVILLENURSERY.COM

### LIGHT REQUIREMENT

Iris grow best in a sunny site. Choose an area that receives at least six hours of sun a day. Iris like good air circulation. Do not plant too close to competing trees or shrubs.

### SITE PREPARATION

Iris prefer a well-drained soil. With heavy clay soil, mix in composted organic matter to improve drainage. Work the soil to a depth of at least 10 – 12 inches. In very poor soil consider growing iris in raised beds.

### PLANTING

Iris grow from an enlarged underground stem called a rhizome. These rhizomes grow just below the soil surface.

Dig a hole about 6 inches deep and wide to accommodate the rhizome and its roots. Build a small mound of soil in the center of the hole and place the rhizome on it. Spread the roots carefully around the mound. (*Figure 1*). Adjust the rhizome so that it is at or just below the soil's surface. Planting too deeply may prevent flowering. Fill the hole with soil and firm around the roots and rhizome. Water thoroughly immediately after planting.

Plant rhizomes 18 inches apart either facing the same direction (*Figure 2*) or in a circle with each fan facing outward.

### DIVIDING

To keep iris looking their best and producing good, large blooms, divide and replant every 2 to 3 years. This is best done from late summer to early fall when they are dormant.

Dig up the entire clump and wash away the soil. Cut leaves to about one third their height. Divide into sections containing one or two leaf fans (*Figure 3*) with a sharp knife, discarding leafless inner rhizomes. Plant as described above.

### CULTURE

Fertilize iris once in early spring and again following bloom with a balanced fertilizer such as Plant-tone. Avoid high nitrogen fertilizers. Keep soil moist during bloom time. Don't over-water as they won't tolerate "wet feet". Cut back bloom stalks after flowers fade. In late summer, cut the foliage back to 6" and destroy it to prevent pests and diseases from over-wintering.