

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LILACS

FROM THE EXPERTS AT ALLISONVILLE NURSERY



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VARIETIES

- The lilac comes in all sizes and colors. The most popular lilacs are of the family *syringa vulgaris*. These include the common purple, common white, Charles Joly (magenta), Krasivtsa Moskv (double white) and Donald Wyman (double purple) to mention just a few.
- The dwarf varieties consist of Miss Kim, a 5-6' May bloomer that looks and smells just like a *vulgaris*, and Korean Lilac, also growing 5-6' that has a small heart-shaped leaf and a small fragrant bloom reminiscent of lavender. This shrub is easily pruned.
- Persian Lilac is a delicate looking shrub with a true lilac bloom and fragrance. It is easily pruned and a profuse bloomer. A tree form white lilac named Ivory Silk Tree is also a late bloomer and very fragrant.

SOIL PREPARATION AND PLANTING

- All lilacs are quite tolerant of our high PH, but would prefer a 6.8 if possible. A little peat and coarse sand to improve the drainage in our clay soil would be appreciated. Lilacs don't like wet feet, but even if no additives are done, lilacs will do well.
- It is important to plant lilacs 2 to 3 inches higher than ground level. If they are too deep, they will not bloom, or may drown.
- Lilacs are not heavy feeders. One application of tree and shrub food in the spring **after** bloom buds begin forming is sufficient. Too much fertilizer will prevent blooming and encourage rampant growth.

PRUNING

- Lilacs should only be pruned immediately after blooming. Late pruning will reduce the number of blooms. *Vulgaris* varieties should not be "cut back." They should be thinned by rejuvenation pruning (removing 1/3 of the oldest wood every 2 to 3 years. Should your lilacs get too large you may cut them back, but you will drastically reduce their bloom.

TIPS & TRICKS

Powdery mildew may be contracted by lilacs. Prevention is best. Use Bonide systemic fungicide each spring after the rains stop.

Powdery mildew may not be "cured," only controlled. It may be unsightly, but it is harmless to lilacs.

Prune spent blooms. Your lilacs will thank you with healthier growth since they won't be setting seed.

Prune some blooms to bring indoors. Their fragrance is intoxicating.