



## Clematis Care

The best time to plant clematis is in the spring, summer or early fall in a location with 5-6 hours of sunlight.

Clematis roots are long and run deep and like it cool and damp but not soggy. A good idea is to plant annuals around the base of the Clematis or plant a low growing shrub to shade roots. You can also mulch the ground around the base of the Clematis plant to help keep the soil and roots cool. Loosen the soil to a depth of 2'. Perform a soil test to determine if the pH is correct and if other amendments are necessary. If lacking organic matter add a 1-2 inch layer of compost and mix thoroughly to existing soil. Carefully set your Clematis plant in the hole so the crown is 1" below the soil level when the plant was in the pot.

Stake the plant and if possible wrap a piece of screen loosely around the plant to prevent animals from breaking or eating off the stem for the first year. The stake should be placed towards the trellis, etc. to train the plant to its permanent support.

Keep your Clematis well watered, do not let it dry out. In the years to come always soak well once a week in dry weather. Feed twice a year with a balanced granular fertilizer, or a good water soluble fertilizer that will get to the plant much more quickly.

Prune your Clematis the first spring after planting, back to 10-12". This is very important to get your plant off to low branching and heavier flowering over the whole Clematis Vine.

Apply a mulch around the base of your Clematis through the winter dormant months.

### Pruning Techniques

1. This group of Clematis produce their flowers directly from old stems and, therefore, pruning must not be done until right after flowering has finished. Prune this group by removing all dead and weak stems immediately after flowering. Large established plants over 15' are normally not pruned, especially if they are growing on trees. All stems at this time should be tied into position on their trellis or other host. Also, if the Clematis has outgrown it's space the correct and only time to prune to size is right after all flowering is done. After pruning new growth will begin, this will be the stems for next year's flowers.
2. In this group all first flowering comes from last season's ripened stems. In early spring watch for swelling leaf buds beginning to show. Cut all dead material off above these swelling buds. Be sure all growth is tied to trellis etc. at this time. Do not tie too tightly, so growth can begin and will not be hampered by tying too tight or cracking these stems.
3. This group blooms later and from new growth. These Clematis should be pruned in March as new leaf buds begin to show low on the plant. All dead material above these buds should be removed at this time. Clean out any old foliage or foliage with

