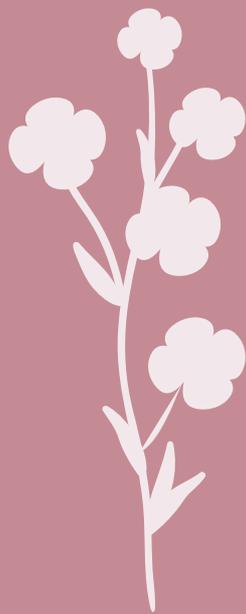




A guide to spring flowers



A GUIDE TO **spring flowers**

Spring flower care

There are so many beautiful spring flowers that their way into the buckets of wholesalers and flower markets in February! They're quite cheap at this time of year so they're widely accessible and can be a very versatile flower, particularly during the cold winter months! These spring flowers come in just about every colour and they often have beautiful scents!

Over the years we've learnt a few tips, tricks and methods to get the best out of spring flowers. We've listed a few of our favourites to help you find the best flowers, take good care of them and make them last as long as possible.

Tulips

Tulips are one of the best loved flowers in the world! They're instantly recognisable, they have a huge colour palette to choose from, a low price point, and endless charm and versatility.

There are hundreds of varieties. The most common are the Double, Parrot and the Dutch. But equally beautiful are Fringed or Frilly, Rococo and Icoon.

Buying

If you're at the wholesaler take a look to see if the tulips are all the same in height and sat below the wrapping paper line. If they're different this is a sign that they're not the freshest. And always check the bottom of the stems. If they're very brown or sitting in water, they're not that fresh.



Double



Parrot



Fringed

Conditioning

Your tulips will often arrive dry from the wholesaler. Once they arrive, unwrap them, cut and condition them as normal and then rewrap them tightly in brown paper and leave them to drink for about an hour. This will keep them straight and make them easier to work with. If you cut them and don't rewrap them, they will flop and bend in crazy directions! This could work well for a vase arrangement but doesn't make creating a bouquet very easy.

Making them last

Always make sure that they're in fresh water. Flower food isn't necessary, just keep the water clean and recut the stems every two to three days. Keep your arrangement cool and in a dark place, away from direct sunlight, as warmth and light will encourage your tulips to grow!

And don't believe the myths: penicillin in the water and a pin prick in the bud won't make your tulips last longer.

Other tips to remember:



- *Some tulips are grown in sand so don't forget to wash the stems in clean water before putting them into a vase.*
- *If your tulips aren't opening on time, gently peel back the petals to encourage them.*
- *And tuck them a little lower in your bouquets and arrangements as tulips continue to grow after they've been cut so you could end up with a wilder look than you intended!*

Hyacinths

Hyacinths are a firm staple in our spring flower picks because they come in so much bright bright colours! Not to mention that they're so long lasting and versatile.

The two varieties most often used in floristry are Orientalis and Grape (or muscari). Orientalis is the standard variety that you'll recognise from flower shops and gardens and Grapes are the smaller, rounded flower.

Grape

Orientalis

Orientalis

Grape

Orientalis



Buying

Your hyacinths will usually arrive dry to the wholesalers. When you're choosing your flowers look at how closed the florets are. Fresher hyacinths will have tightly closed flowers. Also pick them up and check how heavy they are. Lighter hyacinths are more likely to be dehydrated and sat around longer.

Conditioning

Unwrap your hyacinths and condition them by removing any dead leaves then plunge them immediately into clean water. Do not cut the stems as this encourages the flower to leak sap. Not only does this sap irritate the skin but it also makes hyacinths die quicker.

Making them last

Always make sure your hyacinths are in fresh water. Flower food isn't necessary, these little blooms are quite hardy. Keep them cool and in a dark place away from direct sunlight.

Narcissus (Daffodils)

These beauties are the epitome of spring time! Their bright, zesty colour palette and scent make them one of the most nostalgic spring flowers and they're brilliant for instantly lifting an arrangement, particularly around Easter.

There are hundreds of narcissus varieties available but the ones we used the most are the Double, Paperwhite and Traditional.

Other tips to remember:

- *Avoid cutting hyacinths around other flowers. The sap they release not only irritates your skin but encourages other flowers to bloom too. If you do need to cut them do it away from your other flowers, leave them in a bucket of fresh water for half an hour and make sure to rinse them before adding them to your arrangement.*
- *The little florets from a hyacinth can also be used individually. Wire them as you would any other flower for pops of bright colour in flower crowns, buttonholes and corsages!*



Traditional

Paperwhite

Double

Buying

Most narcissus will often arrive dry. Only Paperwhite varieties will usually be in water. Traditionals should arrive with their flower spikes firmly closed or just showing colour. Like the hyacinths, they should feel weighty. If they don't that's likely to be a sign of dehydration or old stock. To check the freshness of Paperwhite s, look closely at the petals. If any start to look translucent or rough like tissue then they're probably not that fresh.

Other tips to remember:

- *Always give your narcissus time to sit and lose their sap before you use them with other flowers as they too encourage other flowers to bloom early.*
- *Sending narcissus as a gift is said to bring great happiness to the recipient!*



Conditioning

Condition your narcissus by removing any dead or damaged leaves. Cut them and place them in clean water. Narcissus, like hyacinths, leak a sap that can encourage them to die quicker so refresh the water after a few hours.

Making them last

Fresh water is essential to making sure your narcissus last. They don't need flower food but like our other spring flowers it's important to make sure they're in a cool, dark place.

Varieties we love

Tulips

Super Parrot; Rococo; Flame; Orange Princess; Double Don Q; Upstar; White Charm; Sugar Love; and World Peace.

Hyacinth

Woodstock; Atlantic; Anne Marie; and Antartica.

Narcissus

Dick Wilden; Avalanche; Soleil D'or; Dutch Master; Carlton; and Ice Follies.



Leafy 
Couture

WWW.LEAFYCOUTURE.CO.UK