

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing hollyhock

Hollyhocks are an impressively beautiful flower with stalks that can reach up to nine feet tall. The added vertical element will create a unique appeal to your garden. Hollyhocks oftentimes bloom in yellow, pink, violet, white and more. These flowers are a short-lived perennial, which means they will come back but they only live for two or three years.

To plant:

Plant hollyhock seeds outdoors a week before the last frost date. However, if you are planting the hollyhock seedlings, wait until two or three weeks after the last frost to transplant them outdoors. When it comes to the seeds, plant them only 1/4 inch deep and space them at least two feet apart. Remember, these plants grow very tall.

To grow:

Hollyhocks do best when grown in full sun with rich, moist soil. A frequently made mistake by beginning gardeners is planting the hollyhock in soil that is too dry.

Since hollyhocks don't stay alive very long, each winter you should cut them back to the ground and add mulch to help extend their lifespan. However, if you live in a tropical area, that is not required. Only cut them back if you live in a non-tropical area. Also, a way to extend a hollyhock's lifespan is to remove the flowers as soon as they begin to fade. Although they have a short life, hollyhocks do reseed themselves, so under the correct conditions, you may have hollyhocks continuously return for years.



[Hollyhock seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

Rust is a common problem attacking hollyhocks. Generally, it attacks the lower leaves of the plant and spreads to the upper leaves. To prevent this issue in your hollyhock plant, be sure to water from below, treat with fungicide and make sure the plant has good air circulation. Sometimes, you may need to stake the plant since they grow so high.

To harvest:

Hollyhocks make good cut flowers because they grow so tall and have longer stems than most flowers. When cutting hollyhocks stems to add to a bouquet, the flowers will stay fresh longer if you cauterize the bottom of the stem.

What Hollyhock craves:

Hollyhocks don't require a whole lot of added nutrition, but some extra fertilizer or compost may aid in growth a bit. Prior to planting the seeds, work compost into the soil and then sprinkle a slow-release, high-phosphorous fertilizer over the bed



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and turn the fertilizer into the soil. Once the hollyhocks begin to flower, water them with a diluted, low-nitrogen fertilizer, such as one made for roses.

Where to buy Hollyhock seeds:

You can find hollyhock seed on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Hollyhock seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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