

HOW TO GROW ZINNIAS



Zinnias are easy-to-grow flowers that add a bright touch to any garden and wow you with their beauty. You can grow giant-sized zinnias from seed. State Fair, California Giant, Bernary's Giant or Cut and Come Again varieties all produce enormous blooms.

Difficulty: Moderately Easy

Instructions

Things You'll Need

- Zinnia seeds
- Seed-starting mix
- Peat pots

Start the zinnia plants before frost indoors or direct sow after frost in a prepared garden bed or container. When planting outside, choose a sunny location. Space the seeds 1 to 2 inches apart and cover with 1/2 inch of soil.

Water the seeds generously. If starting indoors, plant one seed in each peat pot in seed-starting mix and place the pots next to a window where they will receive at least 6 hours of sunlight a day.

Keep the soil evenly moist during germination. A watering can is recommended **outdoors** to gently water the seeds without disrupting the germination process. If necessary, thin the plants to leave 2 to 3 inches of space between them.

If started indoors, transplant zinnias to a sunny location when they are approximately 3 inches high. Wait until all danger of frost has passed.

Water plants as necessary to keep soil moist, but not wet.

Pinch the plants back when they reach 18 inches tall. This encourages branching, which produces additional blooms. However, for the largest single bloom, do not pinch the plant back.

Watch for powdery mildew and treat for it if you see it. It won't kill the plants but it causes poor growth.

Enjoy fabulous giant blooms all summer long. Cut some to bring inside; they make long-lasting cutting flowers. Deadhead the plants as the blooms fade to extend the bloom period. However, any repeat flush of blooms will be smaller.