



## Easter Lilies and Hydrangeas

Nothing announces that spring is here as well as the bright white trumpet flowers of the Easter lily or the rounded blue, pink and purple heads of hydrangea. With little care, each of these plants will brighten your home long into spring.

### Easter Lily

Standing for purity, virtue and innocence, the traditional Easter lily boasts several four to six inch fragrant blooms on top of a eighteen to thirty inch leafy green stem. Grown from a bulb, Easter lilies need to be kept moist and not allowed to dry out completely. Check the moisture level daily and water when the top inch of soil is dry. Water thoroughly as needed allowing the water to run out the bottom of the pot. Be sure the plant does not sit in water as this promotes root rot. Place the Easter lily in a bright cool location, avoiding the hot direct sun. When a new flower opens, carefully remove the yellow anthers. This will prevent pollen from staining the petals. Cut off each blossom as it wilts. When all of the flowers are gone, reduce your watering and allow the plant to go dormant.



Your lily may be planted outdoors after danger of frost is past, generally after May 15<sup>th</sup> in our area. Plant the bulb in a protected place 4-6" deep. The bulb may produce a few flowers again in late summer or early fall. Easter lilies are not normally hardy in our area, but may persevere if planted in a protected area and covered with mulch.

## Hydrangea

The name Hydrangea is from Greek origin meaning water vessel. Water is the most important factor in caring for a hydrangea. With the large rounded clusters of blossoms, the thick fleshy stems and the large leaves, the hydrangea is a very thirsty plant. Place the hydrangea in a cool bright environment and check the soil for moisture on a daily basis. Do not allow the plant to sit in water for long periods of time. If the plant goes into a severe wilt, submerge the entire pot into a deep basin of water and allow it to sit until the entire root ball is drenched.

Potted hydrangeas wow us with their fantastic colors. The color of the blossoms is a reflection of the acidity and alkalinity of the soil in which they are grown. Flowers are blue if grown in acid soil and pink if the soil is near neutral. The color of white flowers cannot be changed by this method.

While these seasonal hydrangeas are beautiful indoor plants, they will not survive in our area as an outdoor plant. However there are beautiful outdoor varieties that do well in our zone.

Questions or comments? Contact Jim Gainan via email [jim@gainans.com](mailto:jim@gainans.com).

