



Dahlias

Planting: Dahlias need slightly acidic, well-drained soil, rich in organic matter. They need a site in full sun (6-8 hours). Prepare the planting area by spreading and mixing 2-3 inches of compost or composted cow manure, with a low nitrogen long-acting fertilizer. Space dahlias 18 inches apart.

Staking: Staking is recommended as Dahlias grow quite tall (3-6 feet). Using at least 2 stakes is helpful, as they also grow wide. Tie the main stem loosely with twine or other soft material to stake when 12 inches high. Continue tying the main stem and branches as the dahlia grows.

Watering: When planting a dahlia plant water well after planting. If planting just a tuber, wait to see some growth above ground before watering. Water dahlias once a week throughout the season with 1-2 inches per week. During very hot and dry weather, water more often. Water at the base of the plant to avoid getting the foliage wet, which can lead to fungal diseases.

Dead Heading: Remove spent blooms regularly to encourage the plant to produce more flowers. Cut the stem just above a leaf node to encourage branching and bushier growth.

Pests: The two most frequent pests of dahlias are slugs and earwigs. Apply an organic product that helps control snails and slugs around the plants per direction on the label. Re-apply every 4 weeks.

End of Season: One to two weeks after first fall frost, cut down stems leaving 5-6 inches. Carefully dig up clump of tubers about a foot away from the center stalk with a garden fork. Rinse clumps with a garden hose, and dry in a sheltered spot safe from freezing temps for approximately 24 hours before storing for the winter. There are multiple ways to store dahlia tubers for the winter. No matter which method is chosen, temps must remain between 40-50 degrees, such as in an attached garage, unheated basement, or bottom of a bulkhead. **Online Dahlia Information for methods of winter storage:** [The American Dahlia Society --Storing dahlias for winter](#)

[National Garden Bureau -- Storing dahlias for winter](#)

