Hydrangeas

Types of Hydrangeas





Panicle also known as "Peegee" hydrangeas produce cone shaped flower clusters in mid to late summer. The flowers start out white, cream, or green and slowly turn pink, to red tones in the cool fall weather, drying and remaining on the plant long after the leaves have fallen.

How to Prune

Panicle hydrangea blooms on new wood and accepts heavy pruning. They are especially valuable in colder climates where there is no chance of their buds being harmed over the winter. They will form buds in late spring to early summer and finish blooming in mid to late summer depending on variety.

Do Hard Pruning in Late Winter or Early Spring

Hard pruning of individual stems will keep the plant from becoming overgrown and encourage healthy growth and flowers. They can be pruned by 1/3 of their total mass without damage to the plant. This is best done by pruning out smaller wood all the way to ground level, leaving only the larger stems – which can also be partly trimmed back if needed to maintain shape.

The large, showy blooms of hydrangeas make them a beautiful focal point in the garden. If hydrangeas don't bloom for a season, its usually due to one of three reasons...

- Not enough sun
- An early frost or cold spell killed the buds
- They were pruned at the wrong time



Smooth hydrangeas have spring and early summer flowers that are big and round. This plant flowers on new wood, making them especially suitable for colder climates where there is no chance of the buds being harmed over the winter months. They will form their buds in the spring, blooming through summer.

How to Prune

Smooth hydrangeas bloom on new wood, setting their blossoms in the spring. They should be pruned in early spring or late winter to stimulate new growth. To shape, remove any dead or injured branches to ground level.



Big-leaf or "Mophead" hydrangeas have exceptionally large, long serrated dark green leaves, and bloom for an extended period through mid to late summer. The flower color is affected by soil pH; acid soil causes flowers to be blue; alkaline soil produces pink flowers. Our area has alkaline soil.

How to Prune

Big-leaf hydrangeas are one of the species that bloom on old wood, meaning they set their flower buds from late summer to early fall, and bloom in the spring. Big-leaf hydrangeas do well without any pruning at all, but they can be pruned to control their size or shape. Pruning immediately after the flowers have faded, never removing more than 1/3 of their total growth. Avoid pruning during other times of the year as it will remove the flower buds and any chance of getting blooms for a year.

Deadhead Spent Flowers

Spent flowers can be trimmed away as they fade to keep the plant looking tidy.

Prune Away Dead and Weak Stems

When most of the flowers have faded, it's time for pruning. Prune away stems that are clearly dead or weak. However, don't prune all the dead wood because this is what will produce flowers as the new growth matures.

Hydrangeas
Pruning



Don't make this mistake when pruning your hydrangeas!

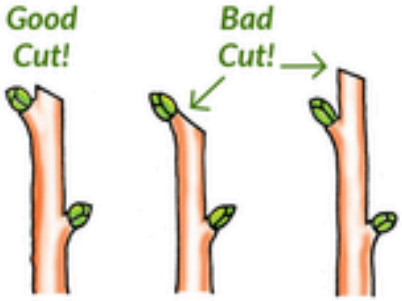
Types	When to Prune
Big-leaf/Mophead *(Macrophylla)* BloomStruck, Summer Crush	Immediately after flowers fade
Smooth *(Arborescens)* Incrediball, Flower Full	Late winter/early spring before new growth starts
Panicle *(Panicle)* BoBo, Diamond Rouge, Lime Hottie, Limelight Prime, Little Lime Little Quick Fire, Quick Fire, Vanilla Strawberry	Light pruning in late winter or early spring

How and when you prune hydrangeas varies according to the different species of hydrangea. Thus, you'll need to determine what species you have to prune at the right time of year.

A common misconception about hydrangeas is you can prune them throughout the season to keep them shorter. Don't do it or you'll risk cutting off the flower buds. Pruning your hydrangeas to reduce their height isn't effective because they will quickly grow back to their original size, or even larger because the act of pruning stimulates new growth. Instead, transplant your too-large, still-dormant hydrangea to a new spot in early spring and replace it with a variety that naturally stays shorter.

General Guidelines

Generally, it is safe to prune as much as 1/3 off your hydrangea that blooms on new wood. For example, if your hydrangea is six feet tall, it is safe to prune as much as two feet off the top and sides. We do not recommend pruning more for two reasons:



- Pruning it further removes too much of the sturdy framework that keeps the plant standing upright.
- The plant needs to retain enough foliage to make an adequate amount of food to support the root system.

When you prune, make your cut just above a set of large healthy leaves. Remove broken or dead branches completely. If in doubt, DO NOT PRUNE! Hydrangeas do not require pruning to grow and bloom well.

Hydrangea Selection Guide



Panicle
(H. Paniculata)

Sun Full to part sun
Soil Moist, well-drained
Color Starts green turns white matures to pink or red
Bloom Shape Cone-shaped clusters
Bloom Time July to September
Zone 3-8



Smooth
(H. Arborescens)

Sun Part Shade
Soil Moist, well-drained
Color Pink and white
Bloom Shape Large, round, snowball-shaped clusters
Bloom Time June to August
Zone 3-9



Big-leaf/Mophead
(H. Macrophylla)

Sun Morning sun and afternoon shade
Soil Moist, well-drained
Color Pink and white
Bloom Shape Large, round clusters (mophead)
Bloom Time July to October
Zone 4-8