



## Care

### Garden Mums Recommended Care

#### Planting

- Plant young plants in sunny location (at least a half-day of sun).
- Plant in fertile, well-drained soil. Soils can be improved by adding compost, peat moss or other organic matter.
- Flowering plants can be placed in any location where a splash of color is desired, but will grow best in a sunny location
- Space garden mums in flower in the fall based on plant size. Young garden mums planted in the spring should be spaced 18 to 24 inches apart.

#### Watering

- Rainfall in many areas is sufficient to keep your garden mums growing well. During dry spells, water as needed to keep plants from wilting.
- Always thoroughly water-in any freshly planted garden mums.
- Garden mums planted outdoors in the fall do not need any fertilizer until they begin to grow the following spring.

#### Fertilizing

- During the growing season, incorporate into the soil a general purpose fertilizer such as 5-10-5 at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 lb. Per 100 square feet,. Repeat monthly until August. Liquid fertilizer may also be used.
- If planting in the fall, no fertilizer is needed.

#### Pinching

- To encourage branching and development of compact bushy plants, it is very important to pinch back your garden mums in the spring as soon as the new growth is 4-6 inches tall. Use your thumbnail and index finger to remove or "pinch" about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the new growth at the top of each and every shoot.
- Repeat this procedure through the summer whenever new shoots are 3-5 inches long. In northern states, stop pinching around July 10th to 15th. In Southern states, stop pinching around July 20th to August 1st. See pinching illustration below. Please note: black bars on the illustrations indicates area for pinching.



Pinch in early spring to encourage branching for shorter, fuller, plants with more blossoms in the fall.



Repeated pinching of new shoots until mid to late July is important for developing plants which will be sturdy and full of flowers in the fall. After the last pinch your garden mums will grow to be more than double in size.

### Winter Protection

- Keep your garden mums' soil moist as winter approaches.
- There is no need to prune back plants until the following spring.
- Mulch the plants after several hard frosts with straw or evergreen branches, etc.
- In the spring, remove any old garden mum stems (a rake works fine) and gradually remove the mulch.