

Growing Lavender

General Requirements

- **Full sun**- Full sun is defined as exposure to more than 6 hours of continuous, direct sun per day.
- **Good drainage**-Proper drainage is just as important as full sun. Does not like wet feet.
- **Soil requirement**-The best soil for growing lavender is a sandy or gritty loam with a pH of between 6.0 and 8.0. This can be achieved with addition of lime to the soil.
- **Climate**-Most cultivars will tolerate cold temperatures, wind, rain and snow as long as they are provided with good drainage.
- **Watering**-Once the plant is established, lavender is drought tolerant. Young lavender requires adequate rainfall or good irrigation.
- **Fertilizer**-Lavender prefers a poorer soil quality. Over fertilization will result in a reduction in flower blooms and a poor quality essential oil. A handful of organic composted soil amendment per plant in the spring is all that is required.
- **Mulching**-Mulch with a ring of sand or white rocks around the plant to reflect the sun's heat up under the leaves of the plant to help keep the leaves dry. Lavender is susceptible to leaf fungus if the leaves stay wet.
- **Spacing**-Good air circulation is recommended. Plants should be planted 24"-36" apart, depending on variety.
- **Pest/Diseases**-Lavender has no known pests and deer do not like lavender. Fusarium, leaf spot and root, stem and leaf rot may occur.
- **Propagation**-Lavender often does not grow true from seed. Cutting can be taken in spring or fall or layering of your best plants is recommended. If propagating by cuttings, cut off 3 inch pieces, strip any bottom leaves, dip in rooting hormone, place in potting medium or sand, place in the shade and keep moist. Plant lavender in the early spring or fall.
- **Pruning**-Pruning lavender should begin when the young plant is still in the pot and continue at least once a year for the life of the plant. Trim back between $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the plant to prevent the plant from becoming woody in the center. If plants are 3 years or older and have never been pruned, then pruning at this stage will achieve nothing. Prune in the autumn long before the chance of the first frost. Keep lavender weed free to ensure healthy plants.

- **Harvest**-Harvest lavender when the first few blossoms have opened on the plant, after the morning dew has dried but before the heat of the day.
- **Garden and other uses**-Culinary/edible flowers, cut flowers for arrangements, everlasting dried flowers, medicinal for headaches, stress and depression, potpourri, oil extracts in perfumes, soaps, etc.

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