



WASHTENAW
MASTER
GARDENERS

After Bloom Care of Hardy Bulbs

Proper care of spring-flowering bulbs after they bloom will prolong their life and beauty for several years. Phosphorous, the nutrient that promotes flowering, moves slowly through the soil, - only about an inch a year. Each year, at bloom time or shortly after, sprinkle bone meal on top of the soil at a rate of six pounds per 100 square feet of flower bed. Avoid fertilizers containing high percentages of nitrogen.

After blooming, snap off the old flower heads, but do not remove the old foliage until it turns brown. These green leaves are needed to make food for the bulb. It is in a period right after blooming that the plant begins to form next year's flowers.

Overcrowding of bulbs is indicated when the flowers are small and fewer than in previous years. This means that after foliage dies down in mid-summer the bulbs should be dug up and divided. Mark the location of the bulb and dig up the entire clump. Clean the dirt off the clump of bulbs, separate the bulbs, and replant immediately. The smaller bulbs may not bloom next spring. Tulips and hyacinths generally need to be divided more frequently than daffodils and the minor bulbs.

The **Master Gardener Hotline** is open Monday through Friday. Lines are available 9:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at 888-678-3464

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