

CHRYSANTHEMUMS



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Mums are a beautiful addition to the garden, but not all varieties are hardy in our area. At Dundee we sell mums in 3 categories: Fall garden mums, Mammoth mums, and Minnesota mums.

Fall garden mums are not hardy and should only be purchased as annual plants. They will provide you with extraordinary color with their masses of long-lasting flowers, even through a light frost. Their ball-shaped habit and good stem flexibility make them perfect for late season annual beds and fall planters. They require no fertilizing. Give them a sunny location and well-drained soil.

Mammoth Mums (also called My Favorite Mums) are hardy to Zone 3b! Developed through research at the University of Minnesota, you can expect them to increase in size over the years, to a height of 14"-22" and a spread of 36"-48" after 3 years. The earlier you can plant, the better chance your plants will have of surviving the winter. Use root stimulator at planting time to encourage root growth before frost. Mulch with 4"-6" of mulch as soon as the ground freezes.

Minnesota mums are also hardy, but should still be considered tender perennials. Many of these varieties were developed at the University of Minnesota. Among their outstanding characteristics are flower form, growth habit, and winter hardiness. Some varieties of Minnesota mums are available earlier in the season. Planting as early as possible will give your plants time to establish themselves.

When planting Minnesota or Mammoth mums as perennials, select a location with plenty of sun and good protection from winter winds. Both require moist, well-drained soil. Well-drained soil is a **must** for winter survival. Space Minnesota mum plants 18"-24" apart. Space Mammoth mums 3'-4' apart. Many varieties can get fairly tall, so you may want to stake them. Use a mixture of peat moss and soil when planting to aid drainage. Use root stimulator to help establish roots before frost if planting later in the year. Once the flowers have completely faded at the end of the season, cut the plant back to about 4" tall. It is critical that you mulch with at least 6" of straw or leaves (straw is best) once the ground is frozen.

During the growing season, water often. Mums are heavy feeders. Use 5-10-5 or 10-10-10 fertilizer. Stop fertilizing when the flower buds begin to open. Pinch back top growth occasionally in early summer (until July 4th). Pinching will encourage the development of side shoots and make for more compact, better flowering plants.

Mums have few pest problems. Red spider mite is the biggest nuisance. Use a miticide if necessary.

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