

# STORING TENDER BULBS



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Tender bulbs such as dahlias, gladiolas, cannas, tuberous begonias, caladiums, and callas cannot survive Minnesota winters unless they are brought indoors for storage. For most tender bulbs, the plant should be dug after the foliage has dried up or been killed by frost. Two exceptions are the Peruvian daffodil and the tuberous begonia. These should be dug before the first killing frost.

Loosen the roots gently with a garden fork, digging several inches back from the base of the plant, so the roots aren't cut off excessively. Loosen the soil on all sides of the plant before lifting. Try not to harm the bulb because diseases enter through cuts and bruises.

Gently wash away the soil. Dry the bulbs for a few days in an area away from direct sunlight and drying wind. Also be sure animals such as squirrels can't get at them. Dust the bulbs with an insecticide/fungicide dust.

Store the bulbs in a cool area in paper bags filled with vermiculite or dry peat moss. Label the bags. Dahlias should be stored upright. Periodically check the bulbs for rot. If excessive shriveling has occurred, the bulbs should be very lightly misted.



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