

Plant "Imagination"



'Amaryllis 'Royal Dutch'



Amaryllis 'Fantasy'

Amaryllis

Amaryllis look tropical and exotic; large, lily-like trumpet blooms on tall, straight stems, with a base of strappy leaves and colors from white to deep red and even eye-catching striped varieties. You'll pay more for the more exotic varieties and larger bulbs, but larger bulbs produce more flowers. You can expect your Amaryllis to bloom 7 weeks or longer.

Most amaryllis will go dormant naturally and re-bloom sometime during winter. However, many people prefer to force their amaryllis into bloom for the holiday season. Many bulbs are sold in the fall, ready to pot up and have in time for Christmas. Here are directions for forcing your Amaryllis for holiday display, as well as general care.

You'll Need

- An Amaryllis bulb
- A pot slightly larger than the bulb ($\frac{1}{2}$ - 2" around the sides of the bulb)
- Potting mix
- Bamboo stalk
- Patience

Planting a New Amaryllis Bulb

1. Choose a bulb that's plump and still has some roots at the base.
2. Make sure the pot you chose is just large enough for the bulb. Generally a 5 - 7" pot will work fine. The bulb needs to feel crowded to bloom.
3. Partially fill the pot with potting mix and place the bulb so that top third of it will be exposed when you fill in potting soil around the sides of the pot.
4. Place bamboo stalks along the side of the bulb. The flowers can get top heavy and inserting the stake now will help you avoid damaging the bulb and roots later.
5. Water well.
6. Place the pot in bright, indirect light and keep the soil moist, but not wet.
7. A thick flower stalk should shoot up within a few weeks. The flat leaves will follow as the flower stalk matures.
8. Turn the pot every few days, so the flower stalk gets uniform exposure on all sides and grows straight.
9. You can feed your Amaryllis with a half strength water soluble fertilizer every 2-3 weeks.
10. When the flowers fade, cut the flower stalk back to just above the bulb. Water the plant until it goes dormant in the fall. You can move or plant the Amaryllis outdoors for the summer, in partial shade.