# Garden Mums



*Chrysanthemum morifolium*

Garden mums are popular containers plants for the fall! They bloom in a wide range of color that can be incorporated into any fall color scheme and can be kept as landscape perennials, if properly cared for in the ground.

Characteristics:

**Dimensions:** 1-3' H

**Growth Habit:** Mounded dome

**Blooms:** Available in yellow, pinks, white, bronze, red, and even two-toned colors. Plants flower naturally in fall, but environmental conditions will determine when perennialized landscape mums bloom.

**Hardiness:** Will often overwinter- with proper care

**Toxicity:** Chrysanthemums are considered toxic to pets when ingested and a potential skin irritant to some people. Mums contain pyrethrin, which is used as an ingredient in some lice shampoos and pesticides!

Care Requirements:

**Light:** Sun to part sun. Six hours of direct morning sun for the best blooms.

**Water:** Proper moisture is important to growth of garden mums. Periods of fall drought can delay blooms and stop growth, so keep plants moist, but not wet. Avoid watering your mums from overhead. This can damage blooms and branches. Water at soil level and away from the base to avoid stem rot. To perennialize your garden mums, keep them mulched and slightly moist through the winter. Then, fertilize in early spring and lightly prune several times to encourage bushy growth.

**Soil:** Mums need well-draping soil. For landscape mums, you can amend your beds with bark or bagged garden soil that has high organic content, such as Organic Garden Soil. Choose a soil that will allow you to keep your mums moist without creating overly wet conditions. Mulch around the plants to prevent water from splashing back onto the leaves and base. When mulching, make sure not to bring it too close to the main stem.

**Fertilizer:** For new plantings, add some slow release granular feed and use Liquid Root Stimulator. For established plantings, use slow release granular in the spring and a monthly liquid feed until mid to late summer.

**Pruning:** Perennial mums should be lightly pruned each spring to maintain a dome shape. Always remove and dead or diseased parts of plants. If damaged or overwatered, some

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sections of garden mums might become detached and easily removable. Pull these parts out and let the rest of your mum keep growing. Deadhead spent flowers to keep your plant looking fresh! Being watered from overhead (and rain!) can cause blooms to brown; remove them as needed.

Uses:

- Great for patio or front porch displays
- Cut flowers, containers

There are three types of mums that are usually available this time of year. Football mums, floral mums, and garden mums. Football mums have large bushy flowers and are also known as 'corsage mums'. Floral mums have many large blooms and look like cut flowers. Both of these are suitable for drop-in containers, displays, and short term enjoyment. They will not fare well in the ground. Hardier garden mums are the best choice for planting in-ground and can also be planted in containers or used in fall displays!

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