

How to Grow Beautiful Camellias

Where – Most Camellias do best in part sun. Filtered or dappled sun (under a tall tree), morning sun or under a lath cover is best. Planting on the east or north side of a building protects them from winds.

Soil - Well-drained soil rich in organic matter. Plant at the same depth they were in the container. Keep roots cool with a 2" mulch. Camellias make very good container plants and can be easily pruned into a tree form (single trunk) or espaliered.

How – Can be planted at any time of the year when the soil can be properly worked. Fall or early spring is best as it allows plants time to get established before peak and usually dry growing season.

- ◆ Dig a hole about twice as wide as the root ball to loosen the soil.
- ◆ If soil is heavy (clay) or very sandy, mix organic matter, compost, or topsoil with the native soil to enrich the soil, improve drainage and/or water retention.
- ◆ Make vertical cuts the length of the root ball and across the bottom. Loosen the roots and the soil. This will help the plant to spread its roots.
- ◆ Place the plant in the hole at the same depth as it was in the container, fill the hole with the removed soil and/or soil mix and pack the soil firmly around the root ball.
- ◆ Water well. Water new plantings regularly until plants are established, usually 2-3 years.
- ◆ Once established, camellias can get by with little supplemental water.
- ◆ Camellias in containers will need watering more often.

Pruning – Pruning keeps plants bushy, well shaped and improves flowering. Cut back above an outward facing bud to shape. Prune right after flowering as that is when plant pushes new growth. Remove any dead or weak growth and crossing branches.

Fertilizers – Use an acid fertilizer (rhododendron-azalea type) in early spring and again in mid-summer. Mir-acid or other foliage fertilizer may also be used, but is short acting and must be used more often. Follow label directions on any fertilizer.

