**Mums**

**How Much Sun and Water Do Mums Need?**

Mums thrive in full sun conditions if you give them enough water. Choose a spot that gets at least six hours of sun a day. Plants that don't get enough sunlight will be tall and leggy and produce fewer, smaller flowers. Just be careful: Light is not the same as heat. Water newly planted mums thoroughly, and never let them wilt. After they're established, give mums about an inch of water per week. When bottom leaves look limp or start to turn brown, water more often. Avoid soaking the foliage, which [can lead to disease](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/pests/insects-diseases-weeds/common-plant-diseases/).

**What Type of Soil Do Mums Like?**

Mums thrive in [well-drained soil](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/soil/what-is-well-drained-soil/). If the soil doesn't drain properly, [add compost](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/compost/how-to-compost/) and mix it into an 8–12-inch depth for best performance. Plant mums about 1 inch deeper than they were in the nursery pot, being careful with the roots as you spread them. Their roots are shallow, so they don't like competition from weeds.

**What Is Pinching?**

The key to those full, rounded domes of blooms that you associate with mums is pinching to create more branching and keep plants compact. Don't hold back; just a few minutes here and there will reward you with a thick, solid-looking plant. If you bought large, full plants in the fall, they've already been pinched and are ready for planting. Young spring plants will need pinching for maximum bloom and the best plant shape.

Start pinching as soon as you see a good flush of flower buds. To pinch a plant, remove the growing tip of a stem by nipping it between your thumb and forefinger. Next, pinch about half the tender new growth at the top of the shoot; choose a few stems with buds and some without. Repeat the process with every 3-5 inches of growth (about every 2-4 weeks) until early July. Stopping then ensures you will get good bud formation and [blooms in the fall](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/flowers/perennials/fall-power-perennials/). Each pinched stem will divide into two new ones.

**How Do You Winterize Garden Mums?**

Prepare mums for winter after the first hard frost. [Mulch up to 4 inches](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/mulch/the-best-mulches/) with straw or shredded hardwood around the plants. [Pinch off dead blooms](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/garden-care/deadheading-flowers-for-extended-bloom/) to clean up the plant but leave branches intact. Mums have a better chance of surviving if you [wait to prune old stems until spring](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/trees-shrubs-vines/care/what-to-prune-when/).