



HELLEBORE GROWING GUIDE

THE
HELLEBORE
SPECIALISTS



Climate and position

- ▶ Hellebores like part to full shade in summer but good light to full sun in winter when in flower. A position under or near deciduous trees will provide ideal conditions. Heavy evergreen shade will be too dark in winter.
- ▶ Hellebores are not troubled by cold or frost.
- ▶ Avoid very sandy soils where Hellebores usually struggle.
- ▶ Hellebores need good drainage and do not like very wet or water-logged conditions.
- ▶ Hellebores require a temperate climate with cool to cold winters. So all of Victoria, Tasmania, ACT and non-arid parts of SA are fine. Also good in inland areas of NSW and as far north as Toowoomba in QLD. Coastal areas as far north as Newcastle in NSW are ok, but further north is too humid and tropical for Hellebores.

Planting

- ▶ Don't leave Hellebores in the pots you purchased them in, plant out or pot up ASAP to enable them to establish before summer.
- ▶ Hellebores are best grown in-ground, but if you want to grow in pots *H. x hybridus* varieties are best, but will require regular potting on (in stages) to eventually large tubs (30-40cm).



- ▶ Plant Hellebores approx. 45-60cm apart.
- ▶ Prepare the ground by digging deeply and incorporate some organic matter.
- ▶ Most Hellebores put on lots of root growth, this is a sign of a healthy plant and we find that congested roots in a pot does not set them back. Just loosen the roots a little prior to planting.
- ▶ Plants may need some extra watering over first summer in the ground. Thereafter they should be quite drought tolerant.

Maintenance

- ▶ Remove old foliage of *H. x hybridus* plants right down to ground when new growth appears, typically in mid-late autumn, before flowering.
- ▶ Late autumn is also the time to feed your Hellebores. Any type of complete fertiliser is suitable provided it contains the three main nutrient elements (N, P and K). A sprinkling of dolomite lime will also be appreciated.
- ▶ If you need to move or divide *H. x hybridus* plants then autumn is also the right time.
- ▶ Treatment of taller species Hellebores (*H. argutifolius*, *H. foetidus*, *H. xsternii*) is a bit different. The old flowering stems should be removed in spring, after flowering has finished. Cut the old stems down to the ground. They cannot be divided, but will usually produce lots of seedlings.
- ▶ In spring mulch the plants and remove spent flowers if you don't want lots of seedlings popping up the following winter. It is a good idea to thin out/remove such seedlings to prevent plants becoming over crowded.
- ▶ Watch for aphids as the weather warms up in spring. Use whatever insecticide you prefer, but use multiple applications and spray underside of foliage.

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