

PEONY

PLANTING & CARE

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Planting in the Garden *(Can also be planted in pots)*

Space plants about 1m (3¼ft) apart depending on their ultimate height and spread.

Dig a planting hole the same depth as the root ball or division and twice as wide.

Draw back the soil with a spade and firm gently around the plant by pressing with your heel of your boot.

Ensure the bright red buds are covered with no more than 2.5cm (1in) of soil as deep planting reduces flowering.

Water in to settle the soil and continue watering regularly, especially in dry weather, during the first summer.

Mulch with well-rotted organic matter to conserve moisture.

Watering

Water regularly in dry spells during the first year to aid establishment, especially if planted in spring or summer. Established peonies are deep-rooted and after the first year should not need routine watering.

Feeding

To promote growth and flowers, apply a general-purpose fertiliser, such as Growmore, each year in spring at 70g/m² (2oz per sq yd). Then mulch with a layer of garden compost or well-rotted manure to conserve moisture and suppress weeds, but avoid covering the centre of the plant as this could damage the buds.

Staking

Many peonies have very large flower heads so it's useful to support the stems by staking.

Deadheading

Dead flowers can be removed after flowering using secateurs as most tree peonies are hybrids and often do not set viable seed. Any seed set would, in any case, not breed true and the resulting seedlings would have different flower colours.