

# Pansies and Johnny-Jump-ups

Pansies and related Johnny-jump-ups are charming, small, cool-weather flowers. They come in many colors, with a variety of markings and flower sizes.

## **Height/Spread**

Pansies are compact, not more than 12 inches in both height and spread.

## **Growth Rate**

Pansies and Johnny-jump-ups are grown as cool-season annuals. They often self-sow.

## **Ornamental Features**

Pansy flowers can be single, clear colors with no markings. The most common types of pansies have a dark center called a face. Johnny-jump-up flowers look like small pansy flowers, often with slender black lines called whiskers radiating from the center.

Pansies have an extremely wide color range including red, purple, blue, bronze, pink, black, yellow, white, lavender, mahogany, apricot and orange. Some pansies have a sweet scent. They are most fragrant at early morning and dusk.

## **Problems**

Common problems of pansies include black root rot and some fungal leaf spots. Avoid overhead watering, which keeps leaves wet, and over-watering. Aphids, spider mites and slugs are pests of pansies.

## **Landscape Use**

Pansies are used for color massing, edging, containers and window boxes during the fall, winter and spring. Pansies thrive in cool weather. They will bloom any time that the temperature is above freezing. Their peak bloom is in spring. They fade and should be discarded with the start of hot summer weather.

Pansies grow best in a location that receives morning sun and has rich, well-draining organic soil. Add manure, leaf mold or compost to soil to increase organic content.

Sow seed indoors in late summer, six to eight weeks before transplanting. The pansies can be transplanted into the garden once the summer heat has been broken and cooler weather arrives.

If you purchase plants, choose ones that are stocky with dark green foliage and have few blooms but many buds.

Plant pansies and Johnny-jump-ups 6 to 8 inches apart for small-flowered cultivars and 10 to 12 inches apart for large-flowered. Water well after planting and continue to water through the fall and winter any time that less than an inch of rain falls during the week.

In the spring, there should be enough rain to provide adequate moisture for pansies (about an inch of water once a week). Never water pansies in the late afternoon or evening since this encourages disease.

## **Fertilize**

To fertilize pansies that are in the ground use Fertilome Bedding Plant Food (7-22-8).

For pansies planted in containers use Fertilome Geranium, Hanging Basket and Pansy Food.

## **Mulch**

Mulch around the pansies with 2 inches of organic material to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. Remove old flowers for longest bloom. Pansies will decline with hot weather and can be replaced with summer-flowering annuals.

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## **Cultivars**

Pansies (*Viola x wittrockiana*): There are more than 250 cultivars of pansies. Most of the cultivars are part of a series. A series consists of several cultivars that vary in color but share qualities such as hardiness, form, markings and so on.

- ‘Majestic Giant’ series has a free-flowering habit and stands up to heat and cold particularly well. The flowers are 3 to 4 inches across, all with faces.
- ‘Medallion’ series pansies have extra large flowers. All have faces.
- ‘Imperial’ series is prized for its non-fading colors and vigorous growth. Most of the blooms are 2 to 3 inches wide and faced. ‘Imperial Blue’ and ‘Imperial Pink Shades’ are especially nice.
- ‘Jolly Joker’ is a velvety purple with orange face. The plant has a compact habit and may grow 8 inches wide.
- ‘Crystal Bowl’ series pansies are small, clear-colored flowers. They are very free-flowering. The compact plants do not sprawl in the garden.
- ‘Maxim’ series has small, faced flowers that bloom prolifically on compact plants. ‘Maxim Marina’ is light blue with a dark blue face that is outlined in white. ‘Maxims’ have good heat and cold tolerance.
- ‘Padparadja’ is a rare brilliant orange. The blooms do not fade under heat stress.
- ‘Universal’ series pansies have masses of early-blooming flowers that may be clear colors or faced. The plants have proven to be very cold-and heat-tolerant.
- ‘Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’ flowers open white, and then gradually turn light blue, then darker. Blooms early and uniformly. Tolerates both heat and cold.
- ‘Rococo’ is an unusual strain with distinctly ruffled large blossoms. Very free-flowering and hardy.
- ‘Antique Shades’ is a mix of unique colors from apricot to rose. Silky blooms are 3 inches across. Heat tolerant.

## **Johnny-Jump-Ups (*Viola cornuta*, *Viola tricolor*):**

Johnny-jump-ups have much smaller flowers than pansies. They flower heavily and are more heat-resistant than pansies. Johnny-jump-ups are ideal for planting around bulbs and larger flowers.

- ‘Arkwright Ruby’ produces dark wine-red flowers with a golden eye and a golden edge in fall to spring.
- ‘Chantreyland’ produces large apricot flowers in fall to spring.
- ‘White Perfection’ has large white flowers that appear in fall to spring.
- ‘Sorbet’ series includes ‘Lemon Chiffon’, ‘Blueberry Cream,’ ‘Yellow Frost,’ ‘Blackberry Cream’ and ‘Purple Duet’. These are all very prolific, blooming in soft pastels. They reach about 10 inches tall. ‘Helen Mount’ has prolific tiny flowers of purple, lavender, and yellow. This is the traditional Johnny-jump-up.