

Lily

GENERAL INFORMATION:

These types of lilies come mostly from China or other parts of Southeast Asia, where they grow in warm and temperate climate. The glorious blooms and scent can last for up to 3 weeks indoors. Lilies are bulbs and it is important to buy plump firm bulbs without signs of softness. The autumn is the best time to plant them. Until growth begins, they need to be kept cool, dark and moist; then, when growth starts, they can be moved to a brighter position.

There are 3 main types of lily:

Turk's Cap-shaped lilies -swept back petals with small flowers. Popular varieties include *L. citronella*, which produces yellow flowers with black dots in summer and reaches 3 ft. high, with 3 in. flowers. *L. fiesta* hybrids are taller, reaching 3 ft.

Trumpet-shaped lilies - also flower in summer. *L. longiflorum eximium* (Easter or Madonna lily) has fragrant white flowers 5 in. across. There is a "Mt. Everest" variety *L. regale* (regal lily) bears white flowers with yellow throats and has a powerful scent. The yellow variety is "Royal Gold." There is a group, all reaching the 4 ft. mark, called the "Mid-century" hybrids, dramatically colored with medium-sized flowers appearing in early summer. Varieties included "Brandywine," "Cinnabar," "Destiny," "Enchantment" and "Prosperity."

Bowl -shaped lilies - flared petals opening to produce a wide bowl. These include *L. auratum* (goldband lily) and *L. speciosum* (Japanese Lily).

Consider lilies as annuals when grown indoors. The bulbs have been specially treated to force them into flower. Plant them in the garden after the blooms have faded and the foliage has shriveled, in spring or early summer.

LIGHT AND TEMPERATURE:

In winter, prepare the pot with charcoal at the bottom for good drainage, overlaid with sphagnum moss and bulb fiber or a sandy soil. Bury the bulbs with at least 1 in. compost above their heads. Set the pot in a dark, frost-free spot with the temp. at around 40°F. Move to a warmer, better lit spot when growth begins in spring. Gradually give more light and warmth, eventually providing bright light, and direct sun for 5-7 hours each day.

WATER AND SOIL:

When the flower fades and the stalks yellow, plant outdoors in a sandy, well drained, humus-rich soil. During the growing season water well but never let the bulb become waterlogged. Reduce watering to allow bulb to dry off after flowering.