



When & How to Divide Perennials

Division is the separation of already-rooted offshoots from mature perennials. Many perennials flower vigorously when they're young, but their flower production drops as they mature. To keep perennials flowering well, division is needed. In addition to reviving older perennials, it is also the easiest and fastest way to propagate them.

WHEN TO DIVIDE:

The time to divide your perennials is when they're growing but not blooming. Divide perennials that bloom midsummer to fall in early spring. Spring and early summer bloomers are divided in late summer or early fall. It's best to do divisions early in the morning when it's cooler and preferably on an overcast day.

HOW TO DIVIDE:

- Water the plants to be divided thoroughly a day before you plan to divide them.
- Prepare the site for your new divisions before you dig so that you can replant them right away. Enrich the soil with **Hi-Yield Bone Meal**, **Cotton Boll Compost** and **ferti•lome Root Stimulator** before planting for strong healthy plants.
- Begin by digging up the root system. Shake off as much loose soil as possible. Remove any dead leaves and stems. To see the roots and buds clearly, you may need to wash off most of the soil. Make sure each piece has its own root system.
- To determine where to make the division, grab the root ball with both hands and twist back and forth. If the plant shows a natural tendency to want to break apart in a certain spot, that's where you want to make your cut.
- Use a tool that is right for the plant. A trowel will work for a loose-knit flower like the coneflower, while a sharp knife is best for plants that have a large crown, for example peonies and astilbe.
- The divisions should have no more than two cut sides on them. Try to avoid pie shaped divisions.
- Plant the divisions as soon as possible. The divisions should be planted one-half inch higher than originally planted as they may sink when the soil settles. Mulch around the crown of the plant to a depth of 2-3 inches.
- Water well after replanting. Follow up with two more applications of **Root Stimulator**.

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JOHNSON'S • GARDEN • CENTERS

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DIFFERENT ROOT SYSTEMS:

Spreading - Spreading root systems have many slender, matted roots that originate from many locations with no distinct pattern. They can usually be pulled apart by hand, or cut apart with shears or a knife. Plants like asters, bee balm and purple coneflower have spreading root systems.

Clumping - Clumping root systems originate from a central clump with multiple growing points. It is often necessary to cut through the thick fleshy crown with a heavy, sharp knife, or pry apart the roots with a digging fork. Astilbes and daylilies are plants with clumping root systems.

Rhizome - Rhizome root systems grow horizontally at or above the soil level. Cut and discard the rhizome sections that are one year or older. Replant with the top of the rhizome showing just below soil level. Iris and bergenia are examples of rhizome plants.

Tuberous - Tuberous root systems should be cut apart with a knife. Every division must have a piece of the original stem and a growth bud attached. Dahlia and some anemone species are examples of tuberous plants.

PERENNIALS THAT DON'T LIKE TO BE DIVIDED:

If possible, avoid dividing the following perennials: butterfly weed, baby's breath, euphorbias, oriental poppies, Japanese anemones, false indigo, and columbines.

Good for Everything you Plant...

Johnson's Soil Recipe

(Covers 100 sq. ft.)

- Three 2 cu. ft. bags **Cotton Boll Compost**
 - 4 lbs. **Hi-Yield Bone Meal**
 - 4 lbs. **ferti•lome Gardener's Special**
 - 40 lbs. **Gypsum**
 - 1 lb. **American Weed and Grass Stopper**
- *Till the first four amendments into your soil (100 sq. ft. area).*
 - *To prevent grassy weeds sprinkle on the Weed and Grass Stopper and mix into the top 1-3" of soil before planting.*

*SAVE money...ask for **Johnson's Soil Recipe Planting Package...**
contains all of the above items.*