

VIOLA

Viola



Characteristics

- Type: Perennial
- Zone: 6 to 10
- Height: 0.50 to 0.75 feet
- Spread: 0.75 to 1.00 feet
- Bloom Colors: Blue, purple, red, rose, yellow, apricot, maroon, white and bicolors
- Bloom Time: April to June
- Flower: Showy, Fragrant
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Medium
- Attracts: Butterflies

Culture

Pansies are short-lived evergreen perennials. Plants do not need mulching in mild winters, but may not always survive extremely harsh winters. Small but established plants generally overwinter better than large ones. A main advantage to planting pansies in fall is that they will bloom earlier (late winter to early spring) than spring transplants. Pansies may of course be easily grown as annuals by starting seed indoors in spring 12-14 weeks before last frost date. Unless a particularly unusual variety is desired, however, many gardeners find it easier to purchase plants from nurseries in cell/six packs in spring. Set out plants in early spring. Pansies are best grown in humusy, consistently moist, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade. Best with part afternoon shade where gardeners like to coax as much bloom as possible from the plants before the onset of hot summer weather. Deadhead spent flowers to prolong bloom. Cut back leggy plants to revitalize. Pansies are the top-selling winter bedding plant in the deep South where they are planted in fall for bloom throughout the winter and early spring.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Viola × *wittrockiana*, known as pansies, are one of the most popular bedding plants for cool weather. Pansies sold in commerce as *V. x wittrockiana* are mostly F1 hybrids that grow to 8" tall with 2-4" diameter flattened face-like flowers. Flowers come in a wide variety of colors including various shades of blue, purple, red, rose, yellow, apricot, brown-red, white and bicolors, often with contrasting blotching or central whiskering/markings. Ovate to elliptic medium to dark green leaves (to 1.5" long).

Genus name comes from the Latin name for various sweet-scented flowers.

Problems

No serious insect or disease problems. Susceptible to fungal leaf diseases. Watch for slugs and snails.

Garden Uses

Bedding, edging, window boxes and containers.

Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Society Plant Finder