

Planting and caring instructions for Lotus

Lotus plants should be planted in a position where it will receive at least **4-5 hours** of sunlight per day during the warmer months (e.g., **spring** and **summer**). They can only be planted out during late winter to mid-spring (or also planted all year round in the tropical region). Lotus usually requires a large amount of space (apart from the miniature or dwarf cultivars). All plants will only flower once they are well established in their growing environment or containers. When in flower, they can be quite spectacular and beautiful.

Use the following steps as a guide on how to plant your lotus tuber:

- 1) Upon dividing or receiving a bare-rooted tuber, place them immediately in a bucket of water if you're not ready to plant them within the next few hours.
- 2) Use a large free-standing pot (or alternatively, a wide shallow plastic bowl/container) with a diameter of at least **450** to **600mm** for larger growing cultivars and **250** to **400mm** for smaller growing cultivars. Use only containers or pots without any holes in the bottom. (refer to diagram below)
- 3) For planting media, use clay loam mix (or sandy loam mix). Alternatively, you could also use soil from your garden provided that they are healthy without any pest, disease or undecomposed organic matter.
- 4) Gently press down or firm down the soil mix surrounding the tuber leaving a large section of the tuber and the growing shoot/tip exposed and sitting on top of the soil. Take extra care when handling the tubers as once the tip/shoot has been damaged, the plant may not grow. Add a top layer dressing of 1cm fine river sand on top of the soil, not covering the lotus tuber.
- 5) Gently water down the soil in the container/pot until all the air bubbles disappear. Place the potted plant into the pond no deeper than 20cms from surface of water to the growing shoot/tip of the plant.
- 6) Lotus are heavy feeders, hence they require a lot of feeding during their growing season. Insert 2 aquatic fertiliser tablets into the soil, taking care not to break any new plant shoots. Repeat fertilising every month from late August to mid January the following year.

In southern Australia, lotus usually flowers in Summer (around Christmas time). In the northern tropical regions, they could grow all year round.

