

Freesias

<https://tinyurl.com/kcfb9uss>



Colorful, citrusy-scented freesias are South African corms, although they are sometimes referred to as bulbs. They can be grown in USDA hardiness zones seven through eleven. Plant them in the fall if you live below zone nine; otherwise, dig a bed for them in fall and wait until spring to plant. The flowers last a long time in cut arrangements, which makes them popular with florists as well as gardeners, and they are available in white, blue, orange, violet and yellow.

These flowers are easy to grow in the ground or containers, preferring well-drained soil amended with organic material. Plant them with the pointed end up, about 2 inches deep and 3 inches apart, in full sun. Water them in thoroughly but avoid letting water stand in puddles.

Freesias need about an inch of water each week while they are actively growing. Their tubular flowers attract hummingbirds and are held facing upward when they appear in late spring to early summer. After the blooms fade, let the foliage turn yellow and die naturally, so the bulbs can store energy for next year.

If you live in zone 9 or above, your freesias can remain in the ground, but if you're below zone 9, dig them up after the first hard frost, and remove the dead foliage. Store the corms in a single layer on some newspapers, leaving space between them for good air circulation. Keep them in a warm, dry, well-ventilated spot to cure for a couple of weeks. Toss any that show signs of disease or that develop soft spots.

Once the corms have cured, store them in a paper bag with some peat moss, and move them to a cool room where the temperature will not drop to freezing.