



Pruning Hydrangeas

Why isn't it blooming? This is the most common question homeowners have regarding hydrangeas. Light requirements, winter protection and when you prune will all affect the success of hydrangea blooms. Some hydrangeas bloom on old wood (the previous year's growth), while others bloom on new wood (the current year's growth). The trick to hydrangeas is to know the species. The following guidelines will help provide the general care needed to encourage blooms.

Hydrangea anomala ssp. Petiolaris: (Climbing Hydrangea) Do not cut back unless you are trying to train the vine to a certain direction. This plant only needs to be pruned to remove dead branches.

Hydrangea aborescens: Common varieties are 'Annabelle', 'Bella Anna', 'Incrediball', and 'Invincibelle Spirit'. These bloom on **new wood** and can be pruned to about 6-8" from the ground any time between late Fall and early Spring.

Hydrangea macrophylla: Common varieties are 'Blushing Bride', 'Bloomstruck', 'Endless Summer', 'Let's Dance', and 'Twist & Shout.' These bloom on **old and new wood**. Prune in early spring; only prune dead tips/branches to maximize blooms.

Hydrangea paniculata: Common varieties are 'Limelight', 'Little Lime', 'Tardiva', 'Pee Gee', 'Pink Diamond', 'Quick Fire', 'Unique', 'White Diamonds', and 'Vanilla Strawberry'. Since these bloom on **new wood**, prune in early spring to shape or cut back.

Hydrangea quercifolia: (Oakleaf Hydrangeas) Common varieties include 'Alice' and 'Snow Queen'. These bloom on **old and new wood**. For maximum bloom, pruning should only be done in spring to shape the plant or cut out dead branches.

NOTE: Hydrangeas that bloom on new wood will bloom later in the summer as they need time to send up the new shoots and flower buds all in one season. Those that bloom on old wood will bloom earlier as the flower buds are set in the prior year.