

## Why won't MY hydrangeas bloom?

1. **Busy Growing Roots** - Newly planted hydrangeas need to establish a strong root system which may be why you don't have flowers the first year. Use root stimulator to help stimulate feeder root growth the first year and patiently wait for flowers in year two!!!
2. **Improper Pruning** - Did you prune your hydrangea back fairly drastically at the wrong time of the year?
  - a. Late summer pruning after flowers fade – Endless Summer, Blushing Bride, Twist-n-Shout, Pink Beauty, Oakleaf Hydrangeas
  - b. Late winter or early spring pruning (March) – PeeGee, Annabelle, White Dome, Little Lamb, Limelight, Pinky Winky, Tardiva
  - c. Prune as needed to control growth – Climbing Hydrangea (as young plants, pinch to increase the number of shoots).  
 Annabelle can be pruned to within 9" – 12" of the ground
3. **Winter Kill & Late Spring Freeze** - Did your hydrangea leaf out early in the spring during a warm spell and then get caught in a late spring freeze? Once stems & buds on old wood are damaged in a late freeze, new flowers will not appear until the following year & only then if it is a milder spring. Did you protect your hydrangea over the winter? If it was a hard winter it could have done damage to the plant with loss of flower buds. For winter protection put mulch around the base of the hydrangea this coming winter. The most common reason hydrangeas don't flower is due to winter damage, even though foliage appears healthy the following season.
4. **Wrong Zone** – If you have had the bad luck to plant a hydrangea that has not bloomed after the first year you planted it, you may finally have to concede that this particular variety is not cold hardy in your area. Another variety may succeed famously. 'Endless Summer and 'Blushing Bride' are two wonderful hydrangeas that will bloom almost anywhere. Often the hydrangea that is not cold hardy was received as a gift or bought wrapped in foil. This is a sign that it is directly out of a greenhouse and may not be adapted to your location. Some "gift type" hydrangeas are perfectly hardy, depending on where you live. But one will probably have better success growing hydrangeas if he or she will purchase them from a local nursery. Most local nurseries try to stock hydrangeas that are known to do well in the area. It also helps to ask the nurseryman (it pays to shop where there is an expert!) if this particular hydrangea is temperamental in cold climates.
5. **Deep Planting** – Hydrangeas planted too deep will not perform well. Planting higher is better.
6. **Fertilizer** – Is your hydrangea getting the wrong fertilizer?
  - a. Do you fertilize your lawn? Your hydrangea could be getting too much nitrogen from the lawn fertilizer. Nitrogen promotes green growth (leaves).
  - b. Are you adding Aluminum Sulfate to your soil? Hydrangeas like acid soil. Apply Aluminum Sulfate once in the spring and a second time in the fall.
  - c. How many times have you fertilized this year? Too much fertilizer can cause chemical burn. You only need to fertilize in spring and fall.
  - d. Does your fertilizer have more than just NPK (ie. Micronutrients).
7. **Water** – Are you properly watering your hydrangea? Hydrangea's love water (hence the name hydro) and deep, less frequent watering is best. However, they don't like their roots sitting in water. Is the hydrangea planted next to a large tree? The tree may be taking up all the water.
8. **Sun Vs. Shade** – Is your hydrangea getting the proper amount of sun or shade?
  - a. Sun Loving – Limelight, Little Lamb, PeeGee, Pinky Winky, Tardiva, Pink Diamond, Unique...
  - b. Part-Shadow (Filtered Sun) – Climbing Hydrangeas, Oakleaf, Annabelle, Endless Summer, Blushing Bride...
  - c. Shade Tolerant – Annabelle...
9. **Patience** – Depending on the spring weather it may take a while for the hydrangea to bud & flower.
10. **Age** – Hydrangeas, like all living things, may die due to natural causes

Plants are temperamental "beings". They can be as different from one another as people. Despite being given the exact same access to food, water and sunshine, even plants of the same species can respond differently to their environment.