

Bougainvillea Care & Tips for Vibrant Color

To help your Bougainvillea achieve its full color potential during season, follow these simple steps:

- **Regularly feed your plant** with a balanced fertilizer high in iron and other micronutrients.
- **Ensure proper watering** by using this simple rule of thumb: If few leaves, but some color – not enough water. If lots of leaves, but little color – too much water. If a combination of healthy leaves and color – just right.
- **Maximize color by “pinching” or pruning** the ends of your Bougainvillea after each bloom cycle, since they only show color on new growth.



Water

Bougainvillea are drought-tolerant, requiring infrequent watering once established. Bring the soil to visual dryness, and then water the soil thoroughly (avoid frequent, light watering since this will promote a weak and shallow root system). Do not let your Bougainvillea become too dry, as this will cause flowers and foliage to drop. On the other hand, over-watering or allowing it to sit in water may cause severe bract-drop or may even cause the plant to stop blooming altogether. If your Bougainvillea is grown in a pot, please ensure that drainage holes are unobstructed, since they do not like wet roots!



Sun

Bougainvillea thrive outside in sunny conditions. For maximum blooming, they need direct sunlight for at least 5 hours per day. If planted in shade or partial shade (less than 5 hours of sunlight per day), your Bougainvillea may have healthy vegetative growth, but little or no bract formation or flowering.



Temperature

Bougainvillea are tropical plants and thrive in intense heat. They grow best in Hardiness Zones 9 and up, but can be enjoyed seasonally in North Texas either as an annual or if they are brought indoors and protected from frost and freezing temperatures.



Fertilization

Bougainvillea are heavy feeders, and they require regular (every 30 days or so) fertilization. We recommend a balanced fertilizer such as our Covington's Flower & Garden Fertilizer to strengthen delicate roots and intensify color of bracts and foliage. Do not apply fertilizer to dry soil, and do not attempt to over fertilize, since this will not produce faster growth and may, in fact, damage the plant. Reduce the frequency to half during non-coloring months, especially under cool temperatures.



Spacing

Bougainvillea grow best when given ample space in well-drained loamy soil (made up of equal parts sand, silt, and clay), mixed with organic matter that allows nutrients and oxygen to more easily reach the roots. When choosing an area to plant your Bougainvillea, remember to plant on higher ground and away from areas where flooding is likely.