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# Tulips



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FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA 58102

# Tulips

Tulips are the most showy of the spring blooming plants in North Dakota. From the time the early species hybrids bloom until the last of the cottage tulips fade may be as much as two months.

Tulips also vary considerably in height among the different kinds. The early sorts usually are about 1 foot high. Darwins sometimes reach a height of 2 to 3 feet. Colors are rich and brilliant. These colors cover a wide range; however, as yet the plant breeders have produced no true blues. There are clear whites, yellows and orange, crimson and reds, violets and purples and many varicolored varieties.

## PLANTING INFORMATION

Plant small early tulips 4 inches deep (to bottom of hole) and 4 to 6 inches apart. Plant the larger, late-flowering kinds 6 inches deep and 6 to 9 inches apart. Place all bulbs of the same kind at the same depth, otherwise, they will not bloom at the same time.

Tulips can be planted in North Dakota any time from September until frost makes planting impossible. October probably is the most desirable time most years.

Include tulips in your foundation planting, flower border, or in front of shrubs. Most often clumps of 6 to 18 of a kind are most effective.

## SOIL AND CARE

Tulips prefer a light, well drained soil. Like so many perennials they will not thrive in low,

moist areas where water is likely to stand. On heavier soils, such as in many parts of the Red River Valley, tulips can be grown successfully if good drainage is provided.

Spade the tulip bed 10 to 12 inches deep before the bulbs are planted. The average spading fork will work soil to this depth quite easily. Well worked soil is essential to good performance of bulbs.

Tulips are much more likely to live if covered with some sort of mulch as soon as the soil begins to freeze. Lawn clippings, clean straw, marsh hay or similar light materials are satisfactory. Take off the mulch as soon as snow melts since some tulips emerge very early.

## RESETTING

In good locations you can leave tulips in the ground for several years without resetting. Best results are not usually obtained in North Dakota, however, after the plants have been in the ground two, or at the best, three years. Darwins, especially, need to be reset after two blooming seasons.

In renewing a tulip bed, dig the bulbs when the tops have begun to turn yellow. July is the best month to dig tulips in North Dakota. Later digging will mean that the tops have disappeared, and finding the bulbs will be difficult.

Lift the bulbs carefully with a spading fork. Sort the bulbs as to size. Large bulbs  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter may be used for bedding purposes. Smaller bulbs which are plump and round

will bloom but will produce smaller bloom and shorter stems; these should be used in beds by themselves or in the cut flower garden. Bulbs of any size which are flat (these are called "slabs") will not bloom the following season and may be lined out in the garden to "grow up."

Save only healthy bulbs. Dry your bulbs well out of the sun and then store in shallow boxes in a cool, dry location for the rest of the summer. Tulips benefit from such storing and are best re-set in September or October.

## KINDS OF TULIPS

Many types of tulips are satisfactory for North Dakota conditions, but from the following groups the average gardener may find enough variety to give a long season of bloom.



Species hybrids

**SPECIES HYBRIDS** - Recent years have seen a great increase in the popularity of new species hybrids. Most popular kinds have been **RED EMPEROR**, an immense scarlet *fosteriana* hybrid, and the Peacock tulips, attractively marked and variously colored *kaufmanniana* hybrids.

### SINGLE EARLY TULIPS -

The single early types seldom are more than 12 inches high and bloom in early May. These may be used for striking effect as a bedding tulip, but because of their short stems are seldom used as a cut flower.



Single Early

**DARWIN HYBRIDS** - A new group produced by crossing the tall Darwins with Red Emperor. These are early varieties with high blooms on short stems.



Darwin Hybrid

### LILY-FLOWERED TULIPS -

Relatives of the cottage tulips with slender blooms and pointed petals. Excellent for cut flowers.



Lily flowered

### LATE, TALL TULIPS -

This is a loosely defined group including those types originally classified as cottage, Darwin and breeder tulips, as well as some newer types. Recent breeding efforts have so mixed the types that a rigid division is no longer possible. As a group they may be considered the main May-flowering type and will include the latest blooming varieties.



LATE TULIPS :  
Cottage & Darwin



Parrot

**PARROT TULIPS** - These large flowered types are "sports" of the late, tall tulips but are characterized by ruffled and ragged petals. Because of their informal shape they are prized more for cut flowers and less for bedding use than the standard tulip type.

### DOUBLES OR PEONY FLOWERED TULIPS -

Double flowered tulips are found in both early and late tulip classes. Blooms of the doubles are not as perfectly formed, as singles, but are effective for bedding purposes.



Double

### VARIETIES

Although tulips are often purchased in mixtures or by color, there are many fine varieties, both old and new. The interested gardener will be rewarded with more striking tulip beds when a quantity of fewer varieties is planted. Of the many varieties available, most are good. A few varieties that have performed well in North Dakota include the following:

- **Bartigon** - Red Darwin
- **Blizzard** - White Darwin
- **Empire State** - Red Darwin Hybrid
- **Eros** - Rose Double Flowered
- **Le Feber's Favorite** - Red Darwin Hybrid
- **Maytime** - Violet Lily-flowered
- **Mrs. John T. Scheepers** - Yellow Cottage
- **Mount Tacoma** - White Double Flowered
- **Orange Sun** - Orange Early Darwin
- **Parrot Wonder** - Red Parrot
- **Queen of Sheba** - Red Orange Lily-flowered
- **Red Emperor** - Red Fosteriana Hybrid
- **Smiling Queen** - Pink Darwin
- **Texas Gold** - Yellow Parrot
- **Uncle Tom** - Red Double Flowered
- **White Triumphator** - White Lily-flowered