

BRECK'S
Hosta Lovers[™]

HOSTA PLANTING HANDBOOK

Simple Steps to Ensure a Lifetime of Beauty



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WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR FIELD-GROWN HOSTA ROOTS

Your hostas are shipped as bareroots. The plants are field grown and have been recently harvested.

If you don't have time to plant immediately, keep the hosta roots in their original bags at about 40°F [5°C] (the vegetable drawer of a refrigerator is ideal) for no longer than three weeks. Quick planting, however, will give the best results.

Don't worry if the roots appear to be somewhat dry when they arrive. We advise to soak the roots in cold to luke warm water for about 30 minutes prior to planting.



Hosta root

WHERE TO PLANT YOUR HOSTAS

Choose a site with the following characteristics:

- Partial to full shade. Hostas are best planted underneath deciduous shrubs and trees, or at the north side of a house or other structure. Do not plant underneath dense evergreens, as those often cast too much shade and make the area too dark. Avoid locations that receive direct sunlight during the hottest hours of the day, usually in the afternoon. Some hostas tolerate more sunlight than others. Visit [Brecks.com/sunhostas](https://www.brecks.com/sunhostas) to browse our selection of sun-tolerant hosta varieties.

Note: The drier the soil, the less sun tolerant hostas are. The leaf colour will look best and for a longer time in partial to full shade.

- Hostas are tolerant of most types of soil, provided it is well-drained. Avoid soils that become waterlogged for an extended period after heavy rainfall. Some say hostas can't grow in clay soils. This isn't true! Clay soils are suitable, but you will need to make sure it drains well. If it gets easily waterlogged, you'll need to mix in a generous amount of compost, leaf mould, well-rotted horse manure and/or sand. Hostas like their soil to be rich, fertile and preferably full of organic matter.

PREPARING THE SITE/WORKING THE SOIL

Hostas can grow without any care or dividing for a long time. Spade or rototill the soil to a depth of 12–15" (30–38 cm). Mix in a generous 2–4" (5–10 cm) layer of dehydrated manure, garden compost and Breck's Food for Bulbs and Perennials. If your soil is already rich garden loam that drains well, the addition of Breck's Food for Bulbs and Perennials will provide the ideal conditions recommended by our Dutch plant experts for superior growth and blooming. If you have a clay soil, you may need to amend for drainage. A good solution is to mix compost and rock dust or crushed stone into your soil. If you have sandy soil, amend with compost and possibly clay to increase the retention of nutrients. This will also help to better retain moisture.

PLANTING

Soak the roots in cold to lukewarm water for about 30 minutes prior to planting. Dig a hole twice as wide and twice as deep as the roots. Create a mound in the planting hole to hold the roots and the crown (where roots meet the stem) at ground level. The top of the plant (sprout) should be placed just below soil level. Spread the

roots over the mound. Fill the planting hole with soil and firm with both hands. Water thoroughly. For proper spacing, please refer to the label on the bag in which your hosta plant has been shipped. Note: It will take 3–5 years for a hosta to reach full size.

CONTINUING CARE

FERTILIZING

A surface application of Breck's Food for Bulbs and Perennials is recommended each spring just as the hosta foliage begins to unfurl.

MULCHING

Hostas benefit from a 2" (5 cm) layer of mulch around the base of the plants. Good mulches are compost, leaf mould and well-rotted manure. Such a mulch will help retain water, suppress weeds and stimulate soil ecology. Apply the mulch in late fall, when the hosta is at rest. Do not pile it against the stems of a growing hosta!

TRANSPLANTING OR DIVIDING

This is best done in fall or early spring when the plant is at rest. To move an established Hosta, loosen the plant from the soil with a large garden fork or spade, work your way around the plant and gently pry it from the ground. To divide an established hosta plant, simply cut through the clump with a sharp spade or knife from the crown down. Cutting through the clump is fine, as hosta roots quickly regrow once transplanted.

HOW TO USE HOSTAS IN YOUR LANDSCAPE

COMPANION PLANTS

Our favourite companion plants for hostas are astilbes, ferns, bleeding hearts and heucheras.

We also like to plant flower bulbs such as daffodils, tulips and wood hyacinths between hostas. When these bulbs are

past their peak, the hostas start to leaf out and will hide the yellowing bulb foliage.



USE AS GROUND COVER

Hostas are fantastic ground covers when you use the suggested spacing listed on the bags in which your hostas arrive. After about three years of hosta growth, the bare soil beneath the foliage will no longer get enough sunlight for weeds to get a foothold.

GROWING HOSTAS IN CONTAINERS

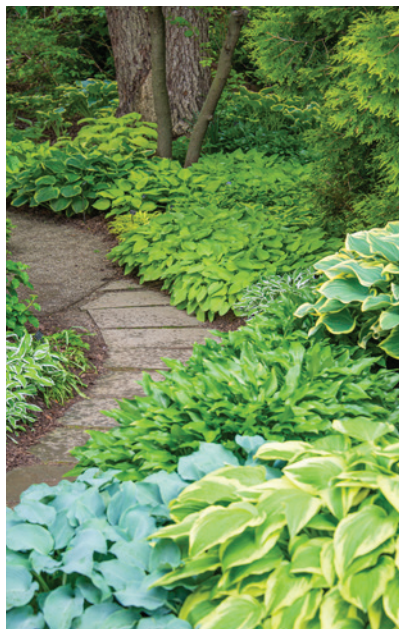
Hostas are among the very best perennials for containers. Use a standard commercial potting soil. Hostas spread horizontally, so for miniature and small hostas, we recommend choosing a container with a diameter of at least 6" (15 cm). For medium and large hostas, use a container with a diameter of at least 18" (45 cm). Make sure there's a drainage hole at the bottom! Hostas grown in pots will quickly fill the growing space, so it's wise to either divide them every third

year or move them to a larger pot. See the "Transplanting or Dividing" section on the previous page for details.



EDGING

One of the most effective ways to use hostas in the garden is to line shaded paths and walkways with these sturdy and colourful perennials.



PESTS AND DISEASES

Hostas are generally carefree perennials that will pretty much look after themselves once established. But problems can arise.

SLUGS AND SNAILS

These pests are by far the biggest problem facing hosta growers. Snails and slugs chew away at the foliage, mainly at night. Controlling them may include the use of beer traps and placing copper rings around the plants. These creatures cannot stand copper! Mulching the area around your hostas with sharp sand also helps. If you decide to use slug pellets, ensure the active ingredient is ferric phosphate, as those containing metaldehyde are extremely harmful to wildlife and other animals.

BLACK VINE WEEVIL

Signs of this insect are irregular notches along the outer edges of leaves. Their larvae also pose a problem by feeding on the crown and roots of hosta plants, resulting in yellow, wilted foliage.

DEER AND RABBITS

These critters also have an appetite for hostas.

CROWN ROT

On wet, poorly drained soils, crown rot can cause problems. This disease usually results in yellow foliage, stunted growth and root rot.

ANTHRACNOSE

This fungal disease thrives in warm, wet weather. The most obvious sign are large, irregular spots surrounded by a dark border. Allowing more space between your hostas and avoiding too much overhead watering that results in wet foliage will help. It is better to water once a week for a longer time than to water in smaller amounts 2–3 times a week. The use of a fungicide spray in spring may be helpful as well. Look for one that specifically targets this disease.

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