



SPRING CARE



FLAMING ACRES  
— DAHLIAS —

# From Soil to Sprout:

## *A Gentle Start for Growing Dahlias*

WHAT TO EXPECT, HOW TO PREPARE,  
AND HOW TO BEGIN WITH CONFIDENCE

### *The Spring Season Begins*

If you're new to dahlias—or even just thinking about trying them—you're not alone in feeling a little unsure.

Maybe you've planted before and nothing came up. Maybe you treated them like roses and ended up with lots of leaves... but no blooms.

Or maybe you're standing at the edge of something new, wondering if you can really do this.

*Here's the good news: You can.*

Dahlias aren't difficult—but they are different. And once you understand a few key things, everything begins to make sense.

YOU DON'T NEED  
TO HAVE IT ALL FIGURED  
OUT TODAY.

*Just a willingness  
to begin.*

### WHAT'S HAPPENING *Right Now (Even If You Can't See It)*

Early spring can feel confusing. The garden may still look quiet... even empty.

But underneath the surface, something important is happening.



The soil is slowly warming.



Moisture is settling in.



Conditions are shifting—getting ready for growth.



Dahlias need this moment. They don't want to be rushed into cold, wet soil. That's one of the most common reasons tubers fail to sprout.

*So if nothing looks like it's happening yet—that's okay. This is part of the process.*

### A FEW SIMPLE TRUTHS for First-Time Growers



**WARM SOIL MATTERS MORE THAN EARLY PLANTING**  
Dahlias wait for warmth. Planting too soon can lead to rot instead of growth.



**THEY ARE NOT ROSES**  
Dahlias grow from tubers, not woody roots. They need different timing, watering, and care.



**LESS WATER AT THE BEGINNING IS BETTER**  
Overwatering before sprouts appear is one of the biggest mistakes beginners make.



**PATIENCE IS PART OF SUCCESS**  
It can take 3–5 weeks (sometimes a little longer) to see growth. That's normal.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO *Right Now*

Even if you're not planting today, you're not behind. This is your preparation window.



**CHECK YOUR SOIL**  
Aim for loose, well-draining soil. If water tends to sit, dahlias will struggle.



**WATCH THE TEMPERATURE**  
You're waiting for soil—not air—to warm up (around 60°F is a good guide).



**CHOOSE YOUR PLANTING SPOT**  
Dahlias love sunshine—about 6–8 hours a day.



**HANDLE TUBERS GENTLY**  
Each one holds the full potential of a future plant.



### *A Quiet Beginning... and a Confident Start* ♥

These early days can feel uncertain, especially if you've struggled before. But this stage? It's not empty. It's foundational.

**YOU'RE LEARNING. YOU'RE OBSERVING. YOU'RE BUILDING CONFIDENCE.**

*And that's where beautiful gardens begin.*



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## Before You Plant *Setting the Stage for Success*

Starting something new can feel overwhelming—but this part is easier than it seems. A few simple understandings will set you up for success before your tubers ever go into the ground.



### WHAT WILL MY TUBERS LOOK LIKE?

If you've never seen a dahlia tuber before, you might be surprised. They don't look like seeds... or bulbs... or even what most people expect.



LONG & SKINNY



SHORT & CHUNKY



SMOOTH OR WRINKLED

All of that is completely normal.



### TUBER SIZE

Here's something that often surprises beginners:

*Bigger does not mean better.*

Dahlias are wonderfully unique—just like people. Some of the most stunning, large blooms actually grow from smaller tubers.

What matters most is that the tuber is healthy and has the ability to grow—not how big or pretty it looks.



### TUBER IDENTIFICATION

At Flaming Acres Dahlias, we take extra care to make sure you know exactly what you're planting.

- Each tuber is stamped with the variety name
- You may also see a number—this is part of our farm's tracking system



Some tubers may already be waking up and showing a little sprout.

Others may still be resting quietly with what's called a dormant eye.



Both are perfectly fine. Just like in nature, not everything wakes up at the same time.



### CHOOSING THE RIGHT LOCATION

*Setting Your Dahlias Up to Shine*

Where you plant your dahlias makes a big difference—but don't worry, you don't need the "perfect" garden to grow something beautiful.

You just need a good spot.



### FOLLOW THE LIGHT

Dahlias love sunshine.

For best results, aim for:

- ♥ 6–8 hours of direct sunlight each day
- ♥ Morning and early afternoon sun is especially helpful



If your space gets less light, you can still grow dahlias—just consider smaller or dwarf varieties, which tend to handle partial sun a bit better.



### GIVE THEM A LITTLE SPACE

Dahlias don't like to feel crowded.

Try to plant away from:



Trees (they compete for water and nutrients)



Large shrubs (they create shade and block airflow)



Buildings or fences that limit sunlight



*Good airflow helps keep plants healthy and strong.*



### A GENTLE REMINDER

The right location doesn't have to be perfect—it just needs to be kind to your plants. You can always adjust and learn as you grow.



A LITTLE PREPARATION TODAY GROWS A BEAUTIFUL TOMORROW. ♥





# FLAMING ACRES — DAHLIAS —

## Soil Preparation *Made Simple*

Healthy Soil = Happy Dahlias

Good soil doesn't have to be complicated.

*Start simple. Keep it balanced. Your dahlias will thank you.*

### WHAT DAHLIAS REALLY NEED

Dahlias grow best in soil that is:



*Loose*

not hard or compacted



*Well-Draining*

water doesn't sit or puddle



*Balanced*

not overly rich or heavily fertilized



If your soil already grows grass, flowers, or vegetables—there's a good chance it can grow dahlias too!

### KEEP IT SIMPLE

It's tempting to bring in lots of new soil or fancy mixes—but more isn't always better.

Too much rich soil (especially high in nitrogen) can cause:

- ♥ Lots of leafy growth
- ♥ Weak plants
- ♥ Fewer blooms... or no sprouts at all

♥ *Start with what you have and improve it gently.*

Healthy soil creates strong roots, vibrant growth, and abundant blooms.

### EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR SOIL

If your soil feels heavy, sticky, or hard—try this:



Mix in **compost** or **organic matter** to loosen it.



Add a small amount of **peat moss** to help with texture.



Use **well-aged manure** (like cow or steer) for gentle nutrients.



TIP: Avoid unknown or fresh composts that could contain herbicides.

### A QUICK CHECK FOR DRAINAGE

After watering or rain, ask yourself:

*Does water sit on top of the soil?*

If yes, that spot may not be ideal. Dahlias don't like "wet feet." Their roots need moisture—but also air.

### WHAT ABOUT SOIL pH?

For beginners, don't stress too much about this. Dahlias prefer a pH around

**6.5 to 7.0**

(Slightly acidic to neutral)

If you're curious or want to improve over time:

- 🌱 Lime raises pH
- 🌱 Sulfur lowers pH

But if you're just starting out, focus on drainage and soil texture first—that matters more.

### YOUR SIMPLE SOIL GOAL

You're aiming for soil that is:



Easy to dig



Doesn't stay soggy



Has a little organic matter mixed in

### HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PLANTING AREA

- ♥ Loosen the soil 8–12 inches deep
- ♥ Mix in compost or organic matter
- ♥ Break up any hard clumps
- ♥ Choose a spot where water drains well



### *A Confident Reminder* ♥

You don't have to get this perfect. Soil improves over time—and so will your gardening skills. Start simple. Pay attention. Adjust as you go.

*Because when your soil supports your plants... everything above it has a better chance to thrive.*

♥ *Good soil today = beautiful blooms tomorrow.* ♥





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# FLAMING ACRES — DAHLIAS —

## How to Plant Dahlias

*Simple Steps for a Strong Start*

Planting dahlias doesn't have to feel complicated. Once you understand a few basics, it becomes easy—and even a little exciting.

### 1 START WITH THE RIGHT DEPTH



Dig a hole about **4–6 inches** deep. This gives your tuber enough warmth to sprout while keeping it protected.

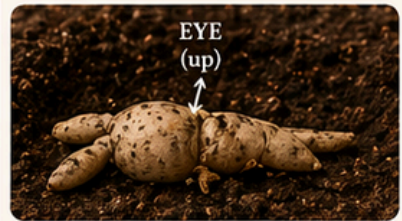
### 2 WHAT IF THERE'S A SPROUT?



You can leave it. Or gently trim it back to about 1 inch.

If it breaks off, don't worry—your tuber will still grow.

### 3 HOW TO PLACE THE TUBER



- Lay the tuber on its side (horizontally).
- If you see the "eye," place it facing up.
- Not sure where the eye is? No problem—the plant will find its way!

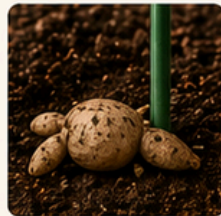
### 4 GIVE THEM SPACE

Don't plant too close together.



This gives your plants room to grow, better airflow, and healthier blooms.

### 5 ADD A STAKE NOW (TRUST ME!)



Prevents accidentally damaging the tuber later.

Your plant will already have support as it grows.

Place a stake at planting time, right **next to the tuber**.

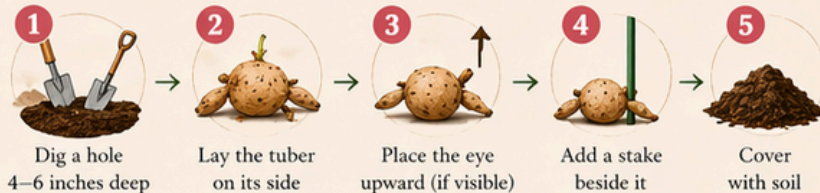
### 6 COVER AND FINISH



- Cover the tuber completely with soil.
- Keep the soil light and loose (don't pack it down hard).

♥ *And that's it—your dahlia is planted!*

### QUICK STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



### A SIMPLE REMINDER

You don't have to do this perfectly. Dahlias are resilient. They want to grow.

*Planting is just the beginning—  
and with these simple steps,  
you're already on your way!*



### A Beautiful Beginning

Planting is an act of quiet anticipation. Beneath the surface, something remarkable is beginning—roots will form, shoots will rise, and in time, your garden will be filled with color and life.

Every bloom starts right here... with a careful planting and a hopeful heart.

♥ *Plant today with care. Enjoy tomorrow's abundance.* ♥





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# Watering at Planting

*Knowing When to Wait—  
and Why It Matters*



One of the most common surprises for new dahlia growers is this: your newly planted tuber **does not need much water—yet**. In these early days, your dahlia is relying on the stored energy within the tuber itself.

Beneath the soil, it is quietly beginning the process of forming roots and preparing to send up its first shoot.

Adding too much water at this stage can actually do more harm than good. Dahlias prefer to start their journey in **warm, lightly moist—not wet—soil**.

Overwatering before growth appears can lead to rotting tubers, especially in cool or heavy soil.



## THE GENTLE BEGINNING

*After planting:*



If your soil is already moist, simply allow nature to do its work—no watering needed.



If your soil is dry, give a light watering once to settle the soil around the tuber.



*And then... wait.*

This pause is intentional. It allows the tuber to root into the soil without being overwhelmed by excess moisture.



## WHEN TO BEGIN WATERING

Your cue to begin a regular watering routine is simple:



*When you see green growth emerge above the soil.*

At that point, your plant is actively growing and ready to receive consistent, deeper watering.



## EXCEPTIONS TO CONSIDER

There are a few situations where slight adjustments may be needed:



### HOT CLIMATES

Soil may dry out more quickly, so a light initial watering may be helpful.



### CONTAINERS OR RAISED BEDS

These tend to lose moisture faster and may require closer monitoring.



Even in these cases, the goal is still moderation—not saturation.



## HOLD OFF ON MULCH

It may be tempting to cover your planting area with bark or mulch right away, but early warmth is essential for sprouting.

*Wait until your dahlias are actively growing before adding mulch, so the soil can absorb the heat it needs.*



### WAIT TO MULCH



Warmer soil helps your tuber sprout and grow.

WARMTH FIRST, MULCH LATER.

### MULCH TOO EARLY



Mulch can slow soil warming and delay or prevent sprouts.



A PATIENT START LEADS TO STRONG GROWTH.

*A little patience now brings beautiful blooms later.*

Water less at planting, wait for growth, and then water deeply. Your dahlias will thank you with strong roots, sturdy stems, and an abundance of blooms.





GROW STRONG



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— DAHLIAS —

# Fertilizing Dahlias

*Feed for Flowers, Not Just Leaves*

Fertilizing can feel confusing at first—but it doesn't have to be.

Here's the simple truth:

**What you feed your dahlias affects what they produce.**



Too much of the wrong thing = lots of leaves



The right balance = beautiful blooms



## START WITH YOUR SOIL

- Mix in well-aged manure or compost before planting.
- This gives your dahlias a gentle, natural start.



Think of this as your plant's "first meal"—slow, steady, and not overwhelming.



## DON'T FERTILIZE RIGHT AWAY

This is important for beginners:  
**Do NOT fertilize at planting time.**

Your tuber is still getting established.

Too much too soon can do more harm than good.



## WHEN TO START FEEDING

♥ Start fertilizing about 30 days after planting.

♥ Only once you see strong, active growth.

♥ From there, you can feed your plants every few weeks during the growing season.



## WHAT KIND OF FERTILIZER SHOULD I USE?

Look for fertilizers that are:

- ✓ Low in nitrogen
- ✓ Higher in phosphorus and potassium

Good examples:



These help your dahlias:



Grow more flowers



Build strong roots



Develop healthy tubers for next year



## WHAT TO AVOID

Too much nitrogen is the most common mistake.

It can cause:

- Big leafy plants
- Weak stems
- Few (or no) blooms



Easy way to remember:

*Nitrogen = leaves  
Phosphorus & Potassium = flowers and roots*



## A GENTLE RHYTHM

Fertilizing isn't about rushing growth—it's about supporting it.

Feed your dahlias with intention, observe how they respond, and adjust as needed.

Each garden is a little different, and part of the joy is learning what helps your plants thrive.



## QUICK FERTILIZING GUIDE

1



**BEFORE PLANTING:**  
Work in aged manure or organic matter.

2



**AFTER 30 DAYS:**  
Start fertilizing once you see strong growth.

3



**DURING THE SEASON:**  
Feed every few weeks with low-nitrogen fertilizer.

4



**USE:**  
Low-nitrogen fertilizer like 5-10-10 or 0-20-20.

*Good soil, the right feed, and a little patience—that's the recipe for a garden you'll fall in love with.*

## A Beautiful Reward ♥

You don't need to get this perfect.

- ♥ Start simple.
- ♥ Watch your plants.
- ♥ Adjust as you learn.

Because when you feed your dahlias the right way... they'll reward you with the kind of blooms you've been hoping for.





# Growing Dahlias in Pots

*Perfect for Beginners & Small Spaces*



## No garden? No problem.

Dahlias grow beautifully in pots—making them a wonderful choice for patios, porches, and small spaces. While they love being in the ground, they can absolutely thrive in containers with just a few simple adjustments.



### 1 START WITH THE RIGHT VARIETY

If you're new to growing in pots, keep it easy:

- Choose dwarf or shorter varieties
- They're easier to manage and don't need as much support



#### *Good to know:*

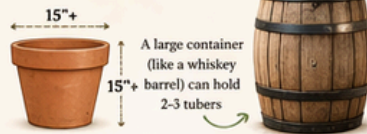
You can grow larger dahlias in pots—you'll just need a bigger container and a stake for support.

### 2 PICK THE RIGHT POT

Size matters more than you might think.

For best results:

- Choose a pot at least 15 inches wide and deep
- Bigger pots = stronger plants and better blooms
- Make sure your container has drainage holes (this is very important!)



If using a raised bed:



### 3 USE THE RIGHT SOIL MIX

Container soil should be light and balanced—not too rich.

A simple mix:



#### *Avoid:*

- ✗ Soils with too much fertilizer
- ✗ High-nitrogen mixes (they grow leaves, not flowers)

### 4 WATERING IS DIFFERENT IN POTS

This is the biggest difference from planting in the ground.



**After planting:**  
Keep soil slightly damp (not dry, not soaking)



**Once sprouts appear:**  
• Water more regularly  
• Check soil often—pots dry out faster



**In warm weather:**  
You may need to water once a day or more



**When plants reach about 12 inches tall:**  
They'll need consistent moisture to grow and bloom well



### 5 FEEDING YOUR PLANTS

Because water washes nutrients out of pots, your plants will need a little extra food.



Use a low-nitrogen fertilizer



Feed every 2–3 weeks during the growing season



### SIMPLE CONTAINER GROWING CHECKLIST

Large pot (15"+ with drainage)

Keep soil slightly moist at first

Dwarf variety (or stake larger ones)

Plenty of sunshine (6–8 hours daily)

Light, balanced soil mix

Feed every few weeks



### A BEGINNER-FRIENDLY REMINDER

Container growing just means paying a little closer attention—especially to watering.

- ♥ Start simple.
- 🔍 Check your plants often.
- 🌱 Adjust as you go.

Because even in a small space...

*dahlias can grow into something truly beautiful.*



# Growing Dahlias in Pots

## PART 2

### Sunlight, Flexibility & Simple Success

Growing dahlias in pots comes with a special advantage—  
you can move them.

And that flexibility can make all the difference.

#### 6 SUNLIGHT STILL MATTERS



Even in containers, dahlias need:

6–8 HOURS OF  
SUNLIGHT EACH DAY

Morning and early  
afternoon sun is best.



#### 7 USE THE ADVANTAGE OF POTS

This is where container growing  
really shines!

You can move your pots to:



Follow the sun



Protect from  
strong winds



Provide light shade  
during very hot  
afternoons



Think of it as giving your plants  
the *best seat* in the garden—  
wherever that may be.

#### 8 BEST DAHLIAS FOR CONTAINERS

If you want the easiest success,  
start with:

- Border dahlias
- Ball varieties
- Pompon types
- Shorter decorative dahlias

These stay more compact and  
are easier to manage in pots.



#### 9 USE CAUTION WITH LARGER VARIETIES

You can grow bigger dahlias—  
but they need more support.

Be cautious with:

- Very tall varieties
- Dinnerplate dahlias

If you choose these:



Use a large container



Add strong staking  
for support



#### 10 CONTAINER BASICS (QUICK GUIDE) ✓



Pot size: At least 15 inches  
(bigger is better)



Drainage: Must have good  
drainage holes



Soil: 2/3 garden soil +  
1/3 potting mix



Water: Keep evenly moist  
(not soggy)



Sun: 6–8 hours daily



Feeding: Use low-nitrogen  
fertilizer regularly



Check often: Pots dry out  
faster than the ground



#### A SIMPLE REMINDER

Container dahlias may need a little more attention...  
but they give something special in return.



They bring  
beauty right  
up close—



to your porch,  
your patio,  
your everyday  
view.



And with just  
a little care and  
consistency,  
even the smallest  
space can be  
filled with color,  
life, and joy. ♥



♥ Small space. Big beauty. ♥ Grow your dahlias. Grow your joy. 🌿

# Grow With Confidence



## The Beauty of Learning as You Grow

As a subscriber, you're not just receiving information...

*you're stepping into this journey with us.*

You're learning the rhythm of the garden—one step at a time.



Each **small action** matters:

- ♥ every tuber you plant
- ♥ every time you choose to wait instead of rush
- ♥ every moment you pause and check on your plants

*This is how confidence grows.*



There may still be moments of uncertainty.

Times when you wonder if you've done enough... or done it the "right" way.

*That's part of it.*



Because even when you don't see it yet—something is happening beneath the surface.



Roots are forming.



Strength is building.




Growth is beginning.



Dahlias are **incredibly giving plants.**

With just a little care, they respond with beauty—blooms that feel joyful, abundant, and full of life.

*But this journey isn't just about the flowers.*

*It's about you, too. *

As the season unfolds, you'll notice something:



What once felt unsure... begins to feel familiar.



What once felt intimidating... becomes something you enjoy.



You're not just learning how to grow dahlias—

*you're becoming a gardener.*

So give yourself grace along the way.



You don't need to do everything perfectly.



You simply need to stay curious, keep learning, and continue showing up.



Because this is more than growing flowers—it's cultivating beauty, patience, and purpose right where you are.

And one day, you'll look out and realize...



You didn't just grow dahlias.



*You grew confidence, too.*



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