



Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

FERTILIZER CYCLE & CARE GUIDE

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



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1. Fertilizer Cycle (Stage-wise)

Sowing / Planting Stage (Oct–Dec in India)

Soil mix: 40% garden soil + 30% compost + 20% sand + 10% cocopeat.

Sow seeds directly in trays or pots, just below the surface (0.25 inch deep).

Keep moist and shaded until germination (7–10 days).

When seedlings reach 3–4 inches, transplant into beds or 8–10 inch pots.

At transplant → Add vermicompost (100–150 g per plant) or slow-release NPK 14:14:14 (1 tsp per pot).

Vegetative Growth Stage (2–4 weeks after transplanting)

Feed every 15–20 days with liquid fertilizer (NPK 19:19:19, 1 g/litre water).

Pinch off top shoots once plants are 5–6 inches tall → encourages bushy growth & more blooms.

Keep soil evenly moist; avoid overwatering.

Budding & Flowering Stage (Jan–April)

Switch to phosphorus & potassium-rich fertilizer (NPK 10:26:26 or 0:52:34, 1.5 g/litre water every 12–15 days).

Add bone meal or banana peel compost once a month → enhances flower color and size.

Deadhead faded blooms regularly → prolongs flowering season.

Post-Flowering / End Stage (April–May)

Let a few flowers mature and dry → collect seeds for next season.

Remove old plants after bloom cycle ends; replenish soil with compost before replanting.



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2. Caring Tips

- ✓ Sunlight – Needs 5–6 hours of direct sunlight daily.
- ✓ Watering – Regular but moderate; keep soil moist but not soggy.
- ✓ Soil – Well-drained, fertile, slightly acidic soil (pH 6–6.5).
- ✓ Temperature – Ideal range 12°C–25°C; protect from frost or excessive heat.
- ✓ Spacing – 8–12 inches between plants.
- ✓ Container Growing – Perfect for 8–10 inch pots or larger containers.
- ✓ Pests – Aphids, whiteflies, and powdery mildew → use neem oil or fungicide sprays.

3. Pro Hacks

- 🌱 Pinching Trick → Pinch the growing tips after 5–6 leaves → creates a bushier plant with double flowers.
- 🌱 Deadheading Hack → Remove old blooms → encourages new flower buds.
- 🌱 Epsom Salt Spray → 1 tsp/litre water once a month → enhances leaf color and bloom intensity.
- 🌱 Mulching Tip → Add cocopeat or straw mulch → retains soil moisture & controls weeds.
- 🌱 Seed Saving Tip → Dry seed heads naturally on plants → collect and store in paper envelopes.

4. Blooming Pattern in India 🌻

Season: Winter annual (Nov–April).

Peak Bloom: Jan–March.

Colors: Purple, pink, white, violet, blue, red, and bicolor.

Fragrance: Mild, pleasant aroma.

Type: Annual flower, 30–60 cm tall depending on variety.

📍 Plot No. 24/2 Balaji Lucky Point, Old Cotton Market Road,
Shree Agro Agencies, Balaji Lucky Point, Amravati, Amravati,
Maharashtra, 444601

📞 +91 9284008858

✉ support@nookandnature.in

🌐 www.nookandnature.in

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