



Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

FERTILIZER CYCLE & CARE GUIDE

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



BALSAM



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1. Fertilizer Cycle (Stage-wise)

Sowing / Planting Stage (Feb–April in India)

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

At planting → Add cow dung compost (200 g per plant) OR vermicompost (100 g).

Avoid too much nitrogen → makes plants tall & weak with fewer flowers.

Growth Stage (2–4 weeks after germination)

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

Pinch the top when plants reach 6–8 inches → encourages branching & bushy growth.

Budding Stage (5–6 weeks after sowing)

Switch to phosphorus & potassium-rich fertilizer (NPK 10:26:26 or 0:52:34, 1–1.5 g/litre water every 12–15 days)

Add banana peel fertilizer / bone meal (20 g per plant) monthly.

Flowering Stage (May–July, peak bloom)

Continue P & K feeding every 12–15 days.

Spray Epsom salt (1 tsp/litre water) once a month → enhances color & bloom size.

Deadhead (remove dried flowers) → promotes fresh blooming.

End of Life Cycle (July–Aug)

Plant lives for 3–4 months → let some seed pods mature & burst → you'll get free plants next season.



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2. Caring Tips

- ✓ Sunlight – Prefers partial shade / indirect sunlight (3–5 hrs). Direct harsh summer sun may scorch leaves.
- ✓ Watering – Likes moist soil → water 3–4 times per week but avoid waterlogging.
- ✓ Soil – Loose, well-drained, slightly acidic soil.
- ✓ Spacing – Keep 8–10 inches apart for proper airflow.
- ✓ Container Growing – Best in 8–10 inch pots.
- ✓ Pests – Susceptible to aphids & whiteflies → neem oil spray every 15 days.

3. Pro Hacks 🌿

- 🌿 Pinching Hack → Pinch young plants → more branches, more flowers.
- 🌿 Seed Pod Hack → Let a few pods mature; they burst naturally → reseeds for free plants.
- 🌿 Moisture Trick → Mulch soil with cocopeat → keeps roots cool & moist.
- 🌿 Companion Planting → Great under taller plants (cosmos, sunflower) → enjoys partial shade.
- 🌿 Quick Bloom Hack → Use banana peel tea (soaked peels) → gives early flowering.

4. Blooming Pattern in India 🌸

Season: Summer annual (Feb–Aug).

Peak Bloom: May–July.

Duration: 2–3 months of continuous flowers.

Colors: Pink, purple, red, violet, and white.

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