



Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

FERTILIZER CYCLE & CARE GUIDE

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



CAMELLIA



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1. Fertilizer Cycle (Stage-wise)

Planting Stage (Oct–Feb / Winter in India for cool regions)

Soil mix: 50% garden soil + 30% compost + 20% sand or perlite.

Plant saplings or grafted plants in well-drained, slightly acidic soil (pH 5.5–6.5).

Water lightly after planting; avoid waterlogging.

Vegetative Growth Stage (Nov–Jan)

Feed every 20–25 days with acidic fertilizer or NPK 12:12:17 + micronutrients.

Mulch around base with pine needles, cocopeat, or leaf mold → retains moisture and maintains soil acidity.

Prune lightly to shape shrubs and remove dead or weak branches.

Flowering Stage (Dec–March / Winter bloom)

Apply phosphorus & potassium-rich fertilizer (NPK 10:26:26 or 0:52:34) → promotes larger blooms and strong stems.

Avoid excessive nitrogen → encourages foliage over flowers.

Remove faded flowers (deadheading) → prevents disease and encourages next blooms.

Maintain slightly acidic soil; add sulfur or organic mulch if soil is alkaline.

Post-Flowering / Summer Care (April–Sept)

Reduce watering during hot months; water deeply once or twice a week.

Apply organic compost or manure to nourish roots.

Protect from harsh afternoon sun and heavy monsoon waterlogging.



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2. Caring Tips

- ✓ Sunlight – Prefers partial shade; morning sun is ideal.
- ✓ Watering – Keep soil evenly moist; avoid soggy conditions.
- ✓ Soil – Fertile, humus-rich, well-drained, slightly acidic (pH 5.5–6.5).
- ✓ Spacing – 60–90 cm between shrubs for airflow.
- ✓ Container Growing – Works well in deep pots (12–16 inch) with acidic potting mix.
- ✓ Temperature – Cool to moderate climates; sensitive to extreme heat.
- ✓ Pests – Aphids, scale insects, and fungal infections → neem oil, insecticidal soap, or fungicide.

3. Pro Hacks

- 🌿 Mulching Hack → Pine needles or leaf mold → keeps soil acidic and retains moisture.
- 🌿 Deadheading Tip → Remove faded blooms → prevents fungal infections and promotes rebloom.
- 🌿 Pruning Hack → Light pruning after flowering → encourages bushier growth and next season blooms.
- 🌿 Acidity Booster → Add a small amount of sulfur or coffee grounds → maintains acidic soil.
- 🌿 Fertilizer Hack → Use acid-loving plant fertilizer → better flower quality and healthier leaves.

4. Blooming Pattern in India 🌻

Season: Winter to early spring perennial (Dec–March).

Peak Bloom: Jan–Feb.

Colors: Red, pink, white, variegated shades.

Fragrance: Mild to moderate.

Type: Evergreen shrub; 1–3 m tall depending on variety.

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