



Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

FERTILIZER CYCLE & CARE GUIDE

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



POPPY

(PAPAVER)



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1. Fertilizer Cycle (Stage-wise)

Sowing Stage (Oct–Dec / Cool Season in India)

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

Sow seeds directly in soil, thinly scattered, 0.25–0.5 inch deep.

Add vermicompost (50–100 g per sq. ft.) at sowing for nutrient boost.

Vegetative Growth Stage (2–4 weeks after germination)

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

Water moderately → keep soil evenly moist but avoid waterlogging.

Thin seedlings to 6–8 inches apart for healthy growth.

Budding & Flowering Stage (Nov–Feb / Peak Bloom)

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

Add bone meal or compost once a month → improves flower quality.

Remove faded flowers to encourage prolonged flowering.

Seed Formation Stage (Feb–March)

Water less frequently → allows pods to mature.

Harvest seeds when pods turn brown → for culinary or ornamental use.



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2. Caring Tips

- ✓ Sunlight – Needs 6–8 hours of full sunlight daily.
- ✓ Watering – Moderate; keep soil moist during growth, reduce during seed maturation.
- ✓ Soil – Well-drained, sandy-loam soil; slightly acidic to neutral (pH 6–7).
- ✓ Spacing – 6–8 inches apart for proper airflow.
- ✓ Container Growing – Use 8–10 inch pots, ensure good drainage.
- ✓ Pests – Aphids or fungal infections possible → spray neem oil or use fungicide.

3. Pro Hacks

- 🌱 Succession Sowing Hack → Sow every 2–3 weeks → continuous blooms.
- 🌱 Deadheading Hack → Remove faded flowers → encourages more blooms.
- 🌱 Mulching Trick → Straw or dry leaves → retain moisture and prevent soil crusting.
- 🌱 Seed Storage Hack → Harvest mature pods → dry in shade → store in airtight containers.
- 🌱 Bloom Boost → Foliar spray with Epsom salt (1 tsp/litre) once a month → improves flower size & leaf health.

4. Blooming Pattern in India 🌻

Season: Winter annual (Oct–Feb).

Peak Bloom: Dec–Jan.

Colors: Red, pink, white, orange, purple.

Fragrance: Mild to none; ornamental focus.

Type: Annual herbaceous plant; height 30–60 cm depending on variety.

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