



Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

FERTILIZER CYCLE & CARE GUIDE

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



VERBENA



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1. Fertilizer Cycle (Stage-wise)

Sowing / Planting Stage (Oct–Feb in India)

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

If growing from seed → sow shallowly (0.25 inch deep) → takes 2–3 weeks to germinate.

Transplant seedlings when 3–4 true leaves appear.

At planting → Add organic compost (100 g per plant) or slow-release fertilizer (NPK 14:14:14).

Vegetative Growth Stage (2–4 weeks after transplanting)

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

Pinch growing tips → encourages bushier, compact growth.

Maintain consistent moisture → do not let soil dry completely.

Budding & Flowering Stage (6–10 weeks onward)

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

Add bone meal or banana peel compost once a month → boosts flowering.

Remove spent blooms (deadheading) → promotes continuous flowering.

Post-Flowering / Regeneration Stage (May–July)

Trim back old stems → encourage new shoots.

Feed with organic compost (once a month).

Reduce watering during rainy months to prevent root rot.



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2. Caring Tips

- ✓ Sunlight – Needs 5–6 hours of direct sunlight daily for abundant flowers.
- ✓ Watering – Moderate; water when topsoil feels dry. Avoid soggy soil.
- ✓ Soil – Light, well-drained, slightly alkaline soil preferred.
- ✓ Temperature – Thrives in 15°C–30°C; avoid frost and heavy rains.
- ✓ Spacing – 8–12 inches between plants.
- ✓ Container Growing – Ideal for pots/hanging baskets (use 8–10 inch containers).
- ✓ Pests – Watch for whiteflies or aphids → spray neem oil every 10–15 days.

3. Pro Hacks

- 🌿 Deadheading Hack → Remove faded flowers regularly → doubles blooming duration.
- 🌿 Epsom Salt Spray → 1 tsp/litre water once a month → enhances leaf color & bloom size.
- 🌿 Compact Growth Trick → Regular pinching of tips → makes plant bushier with more blooms.
- 🌿 Soil Health Hack → Add a bit of wood ash → improves drainage & provides potassium.
- 🌿 Mulching Tip → Use dry leaves/cocopeat → keeps roots cool & retains moisture.

4. Blooming Pattern in India 🌻

Season: Winter to early summer annual (Nov–May).

Peak Bloom: Jan–April.

Colors: Purple, pink, red, white, blue, lavender.

Fragrance: Mild, sweet.

Type: Annual/perennial (in mild climates); grows 6–12 inches tall, spreads 18–24 inches.

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