

Growing Daffodils in Pots

National Daffodil Society of New Zealand

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Three essential ingredients for success are

deep pots to let the roots run
good drainage
water and lots of it during the growing and flowering time

The choice of pots is only limited by your imagination but for best results choose a deep pot with sufficient drainage holes. Daffodil roots can grow 300 mm in length so choosing a deep pot will give the best results.

Now the choice of bulbs and the colour scheme is again only limited by your imagination but a word of caution don't mix up standard bulbs with miniature it is best to keep these bulbs separate because of the differences in size of the bulbs.

The best bulbs to choose are firm single nosed bulbs. Don't plant any bulbs that may be soft as these may rot and not produce a flower.

Prepare the pot

First cover the bottom of the pot with stones or broken crockery. Be generous and make sure the bottom is well covered. Next put a thin layer of dried lawn clippings or straw over the stones.

Soil

For convenience you can use a standard bulb mix which is available from your local garden centre but if you want to be more adventurous and try your own mix here is a recipe

Four parts top soil
Two parts peat
One part sharp sand or crusher dust
A few handfuls of a general bulb fertiliser

Mix the ingredients together to produce a uniform mix.

Now fill the pot to within approximately 7 cm of the top. Add a hand full of sulphate of potash or wood ash and mix in. Place your bulbs on the soil leaving 2 to 3 cm between each bulb and cover the bulbs with more mix until the pot is filled up to the lip of the pot. Water thoroughly and if the soil mix has sunk add more until the soil mix is 1 to 2 cm below the lip of the pot.

Find a semi shady area especially away from the warm afternoon sun to store your pots and leave them there until at least the shortest day. This cool spot allows the daffodil roots to grow strongly. Do not forget to water at least once or twice a week depending on the natural rainfall your area experiences.

Flowering

Depending on the area of the country you live and the variety you have chosen shoots will begin to appear by early July. To speed flower development, bring your pots out into a sunnier spot. At this time you could add a small handful of general bulb fertiliser to the pot. Don't forget to continue to water twice a week and this is particularly important if your pot is now in a sunny sheltered area where you may have to increase the frequency of watering.

By early to the middle of August the flower buds will be visible. Continue to water frequently and enjoy the flowers as they open. Be on your guard for slugs as they love to eat daffodil flowers and I suggest you put a few slug pellets around your pot before your flowers open. Again depending on the area of the country you live you may have to spray with a general insecticide to ensure no bugs eat the flowers.

After flowering

The most important things you can do are

- 1 place your pots back into a semi shady area
- 2 Continue to water twice a week
- 3 Add more bulb fertiliser, one small handful per pot
- 4 Do not cut off or tie the foliage let it die down naturally over the next 2 months

In December you can lift your bulbs from the pot, clean any soil off and store in net bags like onion bags in a cool dry place over the summer. Do not plant the same bulbs back in pots they will need time in the garden to recover.