

How to grow Heaths and Heathers

Where – Most heaths and heathers do best in full sun. Foliage colors are more intense if heaths and heathers are exposed to the elements. Select a location that provides at least a half-day of sun.

Soil - They like a light, lime-free, well-drained soil. If the soil is heavy, you may want to lighten it by adding moist peat, compost or sand.

How – Can usually be planted at any time of the year when the soil can be properly worked. Fall or early spring is best as it allows plants time to get established before peak growing season.

- ◆ Dig a hole about twice as large as the root ball and about half again as deep.
- ◆ Make vertical cuts the length of the root ball and across the bottom. Loosen the roots and the soil. This will help the plant to spread its roots. Work some soil into the gaps in the root ball.
- ◆ Place the plant in the hole and, fill the hole with the rest of the dirt, packing the soil firmly around the root ball.
- ◆ Water well. Water new plantings regularly for the first summer until plants are established. Please, **do not allow the roots to dry out** on new plantings.

Pruning – Pruning keeps plants bushy, well-shaped and improves flowering. Cut back just below the last blossoms to shape the plant.

- ◆ Summer bloomers – prune in late fall or early spring below old flowers.
- ◆ Winter bloomers - shear lightly in the spring after blooming and before June.

Fertilizers – Light application of rhododendron type fertilizers in early spring may be used. Dry fertilizer should not be applied directly to the foliage. Mir-acid or other foliage fertilizer may also be used.