

How to Prune Hydrangeas

Pruning Hydrangeas is easy once you know which type you have. Incorrect pruning may lead to fewer flowers the following year but won't harm your plant. Just make sure you know what you have **before you cut**. At Russell's, we can help you deduce what general type of hydrangea you have based on flower color and shape and advise you on how best to prune your shrub.

Hydrangea paniculata (Sun/Part Shade)

- Blooms on **new wood (new growth)**
- Cut back in late fall or early spring. The amount you cut back will determine size of shrub.
- *Cone shaped flowers: white, cream or green turning pink in fall.

Hydrangea quercifolia (Oakleaf) (Sun/Part Shade/Shade)

- Blooms on **old wood (previous season's growth)**
- Prune immediately after flowers have turned brown or as buds begin forming in fall, remove only the dead flowers.
- *Cone shaped flowers: white or pink and oakleaf shaped foliage.

Hydrangea arborescens (Sun/Part Shade)

- Blooms on **new wood (new growth)**
- Cut back in late fall or early spring. The amount you cut back will determine size of shrub.
- *Round flowers: white or pink.

Hydrangea macrophylla and serrata (Afternoon Shade recommended)

- Blooms on **old wood OR old and new wood** (rebloomers)
- For old wood, deadhead after flowers have turned brown. Cut back in late fall for desired shape and size leaving at least 4 buds on old stems.
- For rebloomers deadhead right after flowering.

Hydrangea macrophylla and serrata bud protection

- Hydrangea macrophylla and serrata buds are susceptible to spring frost. If left unprotected buds may die resulting in minimal flowers and prolific foliage.
- For best bud protection during cold weather and frost warnings, in the fall mulch your hydrangea with oak leaves, pine needles or leaf litter at a depth of 18"-2' around the base of the shrub. Remove protective mulch cover away from the shrub once the threat of frost has passed. May 10th or later is generally a safe time in this area to remove mulch cover.
- Additionally, covering your shrub with a cloth sheet (never plastic) overnight when an early spring frost is forecasted is another effective method to protect the buds.

(*) flower size is dependent on variety

Direct Sun Light Requirements: Full Sun= 6+hours, Part Shade= 3-6 hours, Shade= Less than 3 hours