

Dividing Perennials



If some of the perennials in your garden don't perform like they used to or if they are getting a bit out of hand in size, it may be time to divide them. Fall is the best time to divide spring

blooming perennials for rejuvenation, control of size, or propagation. (Spring is the best time to divide summer blooming perennials.)

To divide deciduous perennials start by pruning the foliage back to about 3-5" from the ground. With evergreen perennials, leave all the young healthy foliage. After you dig up plants for dividing, take the opportunity to enrich the soil at the same time by adding compost and bonemeal or another high phosphorous fertilizer.

Use a fork or trowel to gently loosen the soil around the plants before lifting the clump. Fine rooted plants may be divided by simply pulling them apart with your hands. Use a knife or spade to separate those with tougher roots.

If you want to separate only one or two small pieces for replanting, pulling up the whole plant isn't necessary. Gently loosen stems and roots on one side and cut the small plants off cleanly. Be sure to retain growing points or buds as well as roots on each piece then replace the soil around the remaining roots.

To divide older plants, save only the outer fragments. Eliminate the woody or fibrous center, which will produce few shoots. Divide the remaining clump into three or four pieces. If you break it up any further, the fragments may be too weak and could be overrun by more vigorous plants.



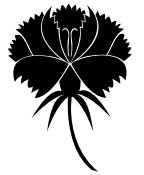
Remove any dry leaves, broken stems, and dead, rotting, or damaged roots. Inspect for any signs of pests or disease.

Replant divided perennials immediately and water regularly to ensure strong, healthy growth. Heel in (cover the roots) and keep watered any extra plants you don't put into the ground right away. Repot those plants that you intend to replant later, making sure to keep their roots moist, or share them with your neighbors and friends.



Divide these perennials by hand:

Blanket flowers (*Gaillardia* spp.)
 Bugleweed (*Ajuga reptans*)
 Columbines (*Aquilegia* spp.)
 Coral bells (*Heuchera* spp.)
 Cranesbills (*Geranium* spp.)
 Deadnettle (*Lamium maculatum*)
 Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*)
 Moss pink (*Phlox subulata*)
 Sea thrift (*Armeria maritima*)
 Speedwell (*Veronica spicata*)
 Spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*)
 Stonecrop (*Sedum spectabile*)
 Sweet woodruff (*Galium odoratum*)
 Violets, pansies (*Viola* spp.)
 Wormwood (*Artemisia ludoviciana*)
 Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)



Divide these plants with a spade or pitchfork

African lilies (*Agapanthus* cvs.)
 Bee balm (*Monarda didyma*)
 Bellflowers (*Campanula* spp.)
 Blood grass (*Imperata cylindrica*)
 Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
 Catmint (*Nepeta x faassenii*)
 Daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum*)
 Daylilies (*Hemerocallis* spp.)
 Fountain grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*)
 Garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)
 Gaura (*Gaura lindheimeri*)
 Gunnera (*Gunnera manicata*)
 Hostas (*Hosta* spp.)
 Jerusalem sage (*Phlomis fruticosa*)
 Penstemons (*Penstemon* spp.)
 Perennial sage (*Salvia x superba*)
 Pinks (*Dianthus plumarius*)
 Poppies (*Papaver* spp.)
 Red hot poker (*Knifophia* spp.)
 Tickseed (*Coreopsis verticillata*)



These perennials are best not divided

Candytuft (*Iberis sempervirens*)
 Carnation (*Dianthus caryophyllus*)
 Delphinium (*Delphinium x elatum*)
 Euphorbia (*Euphorbia*)
 Foxgloves (*Digitalis* spp.)
 Garden sage (*Salvia officinalis*)
 Lavender cotton (*Santolina chamaecyparissus*)
 Lavenders (*Lavandula* spp.)
 Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
 Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*)
 Silvermound (*Artemisia schmidtiana*)

