

Hydrangeas are among the easiest shrubs to grow in the Pacific Northwest garden. They are hardy to 0° F (or lower) and like full sun to partial shade and humus-rich soil. Fertilize in spring with a standard rose and flower fertilizer such as E. B. Stone or Dr. Earth. Keep them well-watered during our summer dry season for best flower production.

The most common hydrangea species are *Hydrangea macrophylla*, *H. arborescens*, *H. paniculata*, and *H. quercifolia*. *H. macrophylla*, the big-leaf hydrangea, is the classical blue, pink, or white mophead or lacecap hydrangea. If you just say hydrangea, you're probably thinking of *Hydrangea macrophylla*. It usually grows as a rather large rounded shrub and produces one prolonged flush of flowers in midsummer. Dwarf and reblooming forms are now available.

Soil pH (acidity or alkalinity) determines the flower color and intensity for many of the *Hydrangea macrophylla* varieties. Sky's hydrangea list specifies the color changes to be expected for each cultivar, as do our plant tags. Our Northwest winter rains tend to turn soils more acidic over time, so flower color can change after planting. Acid soil tends to turn flowers blue or to intensify blue shades. Aluminum sulfate can be used to acidify the soil at a rate of 4 oz. (1/2 cup) per square yard. Water in well after applying. Liming tends to make soil more alkaline, which makes flowers pinker. Potassium nitrate is recommended to intensify pink and red shades; use 1 teaspoon per foot of plant height.

The other species do not change color according to soil pH. *Hydrangea arborescens* produces ball or dome-shaped clusters of white flowers on a more upright shrub; green and pink forms are now available. It is the most cold-hardy hydrangea. *H. paniculata*, sometimes called peegee hydrangea, typically grows as a large, spreading shrub with panicles (long cone-shaped clusters) of flowers that are commonly green, white, or buff, often aging to pink or red. Many varieties now offer bicolor or tricolor blooms. Flowers typically last into fall. *H. quercifolia*, the oakleaf hydrangea, is characterized by its rounded form, large oak-shaped leaves and excellent bronze to red-purple fall foliage color. It requires better drainage than other varieties. As with the peegee hydrangeas, the flower clusters are elongated rather than round, and are typically white, often aging to pink.

Sky also carries both deciduous and evergreen climbing hydrangeas.

Prune shrubby hydrangeas in late winter to early spring. Every year, head back the branches by about one quarter to one third. Make each heading cut just above a pair of plump buds. Every third year or so, completely remove some of the oldest canes. Climbing hydrangeas need only be pruned to shape or to remove spent flowers.

To dry the flower heads, pick them when in their best color and condition (usually in late August to early September). Hang them head down in a cool dry place for 2-3 weeks.

Hydrangeas

CULTIVAR NAME	COLOR AS A PINK	COLOR AS A BLUE	DESCRIPTION/NOTES	PLANT SIZE
H. MACROPHYLLA (MOPHEAD & LACECAP TYPES)				
Akadama	Deep pink		Mophead	4-5'
All Summer Beauty	Rose pink to lavender	Bright blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-5'
Blue Bird (H. serrata)	Medium pink	Deep blue	Lacecap; 4" flowers	4-5'
Blue Wave	Mauve to pink	Lilac to dark blue	Lacecap; 6-8"	4-5'
Double Down	Violet-pink, darker centers	Rich blue, darker centers	Repeat bloomer; mophead, double	3-5'
Eclipse (dark purple foliage)	Cranberry red	Deep purple	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-5'
Elizabeth Ashley	Rich pink, with green eye	Blue to purple, with green eye	Mophead; large	3-4'
Endless Summer	Deep pink	Deep blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-5'
(Endless Summer) Bloomstruck	Rose pink	Violet to dark blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-5'
(Endless Summer) Blushing Bride	White aging to pale pink	White aging to pale blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-6'
(Endless Summer) Pop Star	Deep rich pink	Deep blue to violet inner, paler outer	Repeat bloomer, lacecap	18-36"
(Endless Summer) Summer Crush	Raspberry red	Deep periwinkle	Repeat bloomer; mophead	18-36"
(Endless Summer) Twist-n-Shout	Deep pink inner, pale pink outer	Blue inner, pink outer	Repeat bloomer, lacecap	3-5'
Felicity	Loose frilly flowers like an open bouquet; rosy pink turning lilac, green & cream, all at once.		Repeat bloomer; modified lacecap	4-5'
Lanarth White	White/pale pink	White/pale blue	Lacecap; 6-8"	4-6'
Let's Dance ¡Arriba!	Vivid deep pink	Rich violet-purple	Repeat bloomer; mophead	24-36"
Let's Dance Blue Jangles	Vivid pink	Deep blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	12-24"
Let's Dance Sky View	Medium Pink	Periwinkle blue to violet	Repeat bloomer; mophead	24-36"

Hydrangeas

CULTIVAR NAME	COLOR AS A PINK	COLOR AS A BLUE	DESCRIPTION/NOTES	PLANT SIZE
Magical (or Everlasting) Amethyst	Pink w/green edges; ages lime	Violet w/green edges; ages lime	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Magical (or Everlasting) Revolution	Multiple colors at once—pink, blue, and purple aging to green		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Nikko Blue	Light pink	Medium blue	8-10" mophead	4-6'
Pistachio (Next Generation)	Red edged green with blue & white eye		Repeat bloomer; mophead	2-3'
Preziosa (H. serrata)	White to pale pink w/rose edges		Lacecap	4-5'
Seaside Serenade Cape Cod	Pink w/white eye	Blue to violet w/white eye	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Cape Lookout	Pale green; turns pure white, then white tinted pink		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Fire Island	White edged cherry, aging to pink		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Hamptons	Rich pink with darker pink edge		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Newport	Deep pink	Blue-violet	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Outer Banks	Mid pink	Mid blue	Repeat bloomer; lacecap	4'
H. serrata 'Tuff Stuff'	Reddish pink	Lavender blue	Repeat bloomer; lacecap	2-3'
OTHER HYDRANGAEA SPECIES				
SPECIES/ CULTIVAR NAME	FLOWER COLOR/DESCRIPTION		NOTES	SIZE
H. HYBRID (CASCADE HYDRANGAEA) – grows horizontally, with flowers all along the branches				
H. XXX Fairytrail Bride	White, lacecap		Great for containers; flowers at every node	4' X 4'
H. ARBORESCENS (SMOOTH HYDRANGAEA) – mophead type				
H. arborescens 'Annabelle'	White; 10-12" ball		Long-blooming	5-6'
H. arborescens Seaside Serenade 'Bar Harbor'	White; 10-12" ball		long-blooming	4'
H. arborescens 'Incrediball'	White; 12" ball			4-5'
H. arborescens 'FlowerFull'	White, 10" dome; very floriferous		Strong stems	4-5'
H. arborescens 'Invincibelle Wee White'	Blush pink flowers age pure white		Repeat bloomer	12-30"

Hydrangeas

SPECIES/ CULTIVAR NAME	FLOWER COLOR/DESCRIPTION	NOTES	SIZE
H. PANICULATA (PEEGEE HYDRANGEA)			
H. paniculata 'Berry White'	White aging to raspberry red	Rounded panicles	6-7'
H. paniculata 'Diamond Rouge'	White aging to pink then wine red		4-5'
H. paniculata 'Early Evolution'	Lime turning to white, salmon, and eventually dark pink	Very early blooming; loose panicles	24-30"
H. paniculata 'Fire Light'	Creamy white aging to rich pink-red	Longest blooming, into October	5-6'
H. paniculata 'Fire Light Tidbit'	Pale green aging to white, then pink, then rich red	Longest blooming, into October	2-3'
H. paniculata 'Limelight'	Lime aging to white then pink		6-8'
H. paniculata 'Limelight Prime'	Lime green aging to white, then raspberry pink	Blooms earlier than 'Limelight'	4-6'
H. paniculata 'Little Hottie'	Snow white aging pink	Tolerates heat	3-5'
H. paniculata 'Little Lime'	Lime aging to white then pink	Rounded panicles	3-5'
H. paniculata 'Little Quick Fire'	White aging to deep pink-red	Early blooming	3-5'
H. paniculata 'Pinky Winky'	White blushing pink from base		6-8'
H. paniculata 'Quick Fire'	White aging to deep pink-red	Early blooming	6-8'
H. paniculata 'Strawberry Sundae'	Cream turning to pink, then strawberry; all colors at once	Dwarf version of Vanilla Strawberry	4-5'
H. paniculata 'Vanilla Strawberry'	Cream turning to pink, then strawberry; all colors at once		6-8'
H. QUERCIFOLIA (OAKLEAF HYDRANGEA)- noted for colorful fall foliage			
H. quercifolia 'Jetstream'	White aging raspberry-red	Upright flowers	5-6'
H. quercifolia 'Munchkin'	White aging pink	Upright flowers	3'
H. quercifolia 'Ruby Slippers'	White aging deep pink	Very large flowers	3-4'
H. quercifolia 'Snow Queen'	White aging pink		4-6'
CLIMBING HYDRANGEAS			
H. anomala petiolaris (Climbing Hydrangea)	White, flat, 6-7" lacecap flowers	Deciduous foliage	To 20'
H. anomala petiolaris 'Miranda'	White, flat, 6-7" lacecap flowers	Yellow-edged deciduous foliage	10-12'
H. integrifolia (Evergreen Climbing Hydrangea)	White lacecap flowers	Glossy green foliage	12-15'

