

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'
Amethyst	Red	Purple	6-8"	3-4'
Bloomstruck (Endless Summer)	Rose pink	Violet to dark blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-5'
Blue Bird (H. serrata)	Medium pink	Deep blue	Lacecap; 4" flowers	4-5'
Blue Enchantress AKA Enchantress	Light pink aging to cream & green	Periwinkle aging to cream & green	Repeat bloomer; mophead; ruby-black stems	3-5'
Blue Wave	Mauve to pink	Lilac to dark blue	Lacecap; 6-8"	4-5'
Blushing Bride (Endless Summer)	White aging to pale pink	White aging to pale blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-6'
Cityline Paris	Rich pink-red w/white eye		6-8" mophead	2-3'
Eclipse (Dark purple foliage)	Cranberry red	Deep purple	Mophead;	
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'
Everlasting Revolution	Multiple colors at once—pink, blue, and purple aging to green		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Forever Pink	Bright Pink		Mophead	3-4'
Let's Dance Blue Jangles	Vivid pink	Deep blue	Repeat bloomer; mophead	12-24"
Lanarth White	White/pale pink	White/pale blue	Lacecap; 6-8"	4-6'
Merritt's Beauty	Carmine red	Medium blue	6-8"	4-10'
Miss Saori	Double two-toned flowers are white edged deep rose-pink		Mophead; long-blooming	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'
Pop Star (Endless Summer)	Deep rich pink	Deep blue to violet inner, paler outer	Repeat bloomer, lacecap	18-36"
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'

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Seaside Serenade Cape Lookout	Pale green; turns pure white, then white tinted pink		Mophead; long blooming	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Cape May	Deep pink	Blue	Lacecap, large	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Fire Island	White edged cherry, aging to pink		Mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Hamptons	Rich pink with darker pink edge		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Martha's Vineyard	Vibrant pink-red		Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Seaside Serenade Newport	Deep pink	Blue-violet	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Summer Crush (Endless Summer)	Raspberry red	Deep periwinkle	Repeat bloomer; mophead	18-36"
Sweet Fantasy (aka Peppermint Swirl)	Fuschia and pale pink, swirled	Periwinkle and violet, swirled	Repeat bloomer; mophead	3-4'
Tilt-a-Swirl	Changes from pure green to pink-edged to rich red		Mophead; very long bloom time	3-4'
Twist-n-Shout (Endless Summer)	Deep pink inner, pale pink outer	Blue inner, pink outer	Repeat bloomer, lacecap	3-5'
Wedding Gown (AKA Dancing Snow)	Double white lacecap flowers		Repeat bloomer, lacecap	2-3'
Onyx Zebra (striking black stems)	Pure white		Mophead	4'X20"
OTHER HYDRANGEA SPECIES				
SPECIES/ CULTIVAR NAME	FLOWER COLOR		DESCRIPTION/ NOTES	PLANT SIZE
H. ARBORESCENS (SMOOTH HYDRANGEA) – 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. PANICULATA (PEEGEE HYDRANGEA)				
H. paniculata ‘Bobo’	Creamy white aging to pink			3’
H. paniculata ‘Early Evolution’	Lime turning to white, salmon, and eventually dark pink		Very early blooming; loose panicles	24-30”

Hydrangeas

SPECIES/ CULTIVAR NAME	FLOWER COLOR	DESCRIPTION/ NOTES	PLANT SIZE
H. paniculata 'Fire and Ice'	Creamy white aging to red	Red stems	6-10'
H. paniculata 'Fire Light'	Creamy white aging to rich pink-red	Sturdy stems	5-6'
H. paniculata 'Limelight'	Lime green 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 green 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 'Phantom'	Creamy white aging soft pink	Very large panicles	6-8'
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 Shake'	Creamy white turning to creamy pink		4-5'
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 'Pee Wee'	White		3-4'
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'