Lilies require a rich, well-drained soil. If your soil is poor or heavy, work in plenty of compost, peat, or other organic material. Another solution to poor drainage is planting on a gentle slope, in raised beds, or in hills. Do not plant in low wet spots.

Lilies like plenty of light but not heat. Although full sun until mid-afternoon is optimal, lilies will perform quite acceptably with filtered sunlight or partial shade. Avoid planting them near walks or walls that reflect the hot afternoon sun.

When planting lily bulbs, first loosen the soil and mix in a balanced rose and flower fertilizer. Cover the nose of the bulb with 4 to 6 inches of soil. This allows for good stem rooting and protects against extreme winter cold. If planting plants, set so the top of the rootball is just at the surface. Remove the lilies from their containers carefully, or cut away the pot so as not to break the stem. If you break the stem, there will be no bloom that season, though the plant will survive to flower in subsequent years. If you wish, you may leave lilies in the container until after flowering is complete, then plant them in their final location when the stem turns brown. Lilies in pots should be in a loose, porous potting medium, the bulbs planted at least two inches deep, and kept well watered and fed.

Lilies like cool roots. Planting shallow rooted groundcovers, perennials, or annuals among your lilies helps shade the lilies’ roots and looks nice as well. Bark or compost can be used as a mulch to keep the soil moist and cool. Lilies are extremely hardy, but in the coldest areas applying a coarse mulch such as straw or pine needles in the fall provides added insurance against winter injury.

Lilies benefit from a feeding in the early spring, prior to their active growth. Avoid using high nitrogen fertilizers as they can cause foliar burn and make lilies susceptible to disease. Use a high quality organic rose and flower fertilizer such as Dr. Earth, Hendrikus, or E. B. Stone.

Aphids and fungus can be controlled by the same sprays used on roses, should they become a problem.

Lily bulbs, unlike most bulbs, are never completely dormant. They should therefore be planted as soon as possible after receipt. If you must store them, keep them in a refrigerator or other cool place.