

THE OLE MILL COUNTRY STORE & GARDENS

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HANGING BASKET CARE

Hanging baskets are beautiful editions to any garden, porch or patio. They add additional focal points and color to any landscape. Hanging baskets are great for those who have their entire yard planted, or for those who can't or don't wish to plant their yard.

There are several things to consider when deciding on which hanging basket is right for you. First, what type of sun will the basket be placed in. Here is a good rule of thumb:

Shade = Little or no sun

Part Shade/ Part Sun = Sun until 1:00

Full Sun = At least 5 to 6 hours of sun

Water

Next consider your watering requirements. Most baskets will require water **EVERYDAY!** Very few hanging baskets can go without water everyday during the heat of the summer. Examples of these baskets would be Portulaca, Begonias, and Torenia. Of course on rainy days, watering may not be necessary, but do not rely on rain to water your hanging baskets. Hanging baskets should be checked everyday to determine if they need water. Place your finger in the soil and see if it is dry. If so, water the basket. If you are not sure after testing the soil, you should probably water. Typically, we water the baskets in the greenhouse everyday, with the exception of the above listed baskets. When we water, the water drains thoroughly out of the bottom of the basket. This ensures that the roots are receiving enough water. Hanging baskets will usually stop blooming when there is a shortage of water.

Fertilizer

Hanging baskets should be fertilized every 14 days. Of course with every rule, there are exceptions. Impatiens should be fertilized monthly. Usually more fertilizer promotes lush green leaves and no blooms. Make sure that you follow directions on the fertilizer. More is not always better in this case. We recommend Miracle Gro.

Maintenance

Removing spent blooms not only improves the appearance of your basket, but encourages new blooms. Geraniums, verbena and bracteantha to name a few benefit from "dead heading."

If your baskets should become "leggy," consider cutting them back using the "hack and whack" method. Petunias, impatiens, torenia, and verbena are excellent examples of plants that will come back after a haircut. Do not be afraid to cut them back. In approximately 2-3 weeks, your basket will look good as new.