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Dahlia Talk *from tubers to blooms*

April - The Eyes are Budding



Lakeside, Photo by Kimberly Hirsch.

Finally, the warm days have brought the tubers to life. My divisions (tubers) along with the few that I was able to buy from dahlia specialists are now in trays with potting soil and some vermiculite. Pot clumps from the commercial sellers like Brecks are somewhat behind. If yours are like mine, have patience. Put them in pots or trays with packaged potting soil, sprinkle them a bit and leave them in a warm place.

If you care about names, buy or make some wired plant tags and keep them with the tubers or clumps. Label with widely available Sharpie markers - choose permanent and industrial. Or for labels that will last for years, opt for a label maker with outdoor, thermal tape.

The soil in our garden is dry. There has been very little rain in the past month. This is a good time to put stakes into the ground. In most areas dahlias will grow to 4-5 feet tall, so they will need a metal, plastic, or wooden stake to keep them stable. Small container dahlias can be planted into pots, 10 inches or bigger, or directly into the ground.

Dahlias can be planted in any garden bed where you can grow tomatoes. For a more thorough discussion about soil, check out [this page](#) about soil building. At the start, the dahlia plant will be fed from the tuber. Later it will put out roots. Rarely, a plant will not make roots and it will stop growing when nutrient from the tuber is exhausted. If that happens gently dig out the tuber and check for roots. Dahlias grow roots near the ground. A handful of time-release or general fertilizer, scratched into the surface will be sufficient. Do not put the fertilizer under the tuber. It will do more harm than good.

Plant the dahlia about two or three inches below the soil surface with the eye or shoot facing up. Do not make it struggle to find light. If the shoot has leaves, do not bury them. You can always fill in later as the plant grows. Remember the tag.

**Planting dahlias in your garden is easy:
A tuber, a stake, a tag, a patch or container with soil, and sunlight!**

Have fun,

Harry Risetto



Central States Dahlia Society Propagation Project - growing beautiful plants for their sale! [More info](#). Photo by Ted Magura.

Still need tubers or plants? Check out [local society sales](#) in your area.

More Information

[Garden Tags](#)

[Planting in the ground](#) (video)

[Planting in containers](#) (index)

[Dahlia University](#) has lots of articles and "classes" on growing dahlias:

[Preparing for a Dahlia Garden](#)

[Early Season Dahlia Hints](#)

[Planting and Staking](#)

[Supporting Dahlias](#)



ADS National Show Open to the Public August 26-27

Thousands of show-stopping blooms will be on display in the 18,000 square foot Grand Ballroom of the Holiday Inn, Columbia Riverfront Hotel and Convention Center in Portland Oregon. Hosted by the Portland Dahlia Society. **You are invited** (free of charge).

[Information](#)

[General information video](#)

American Dahlia Society

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