



How to Grow Penstemon

Position – Full Sun or part shade

Soil – Well-drained

Flowering Period – July to October

Hardiness – Hardy

About Penstemon

Penstemon are deciduous or evergreen perennials or subshrubs with modest, narrow leaves and elegant bell-shaped flowers that are stacked together on stately spires from summer to early autumn. They are excellent plants that are easy to grow, with a long-flowering period. They are best suited to flower beds and borders within courtyard, cottage and informal garden settings. You should expect to see Penstemon grow to an approximate height of 60cm (24") and a spread of 45-60cm (18-24").

How to plant Penstemon

Penstemon are best suited to well-drained soil of chalk, loam and sand within an acidic, alkaline or neutral PH balance. They should be positioned in full sun or part shade where they will thrive to optimum effect. They are great for cottage style gardens and will attract bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects. If your Penstemon are grown from plugs, sit them in a tray of shallow water to fully hydrate the roots before transplanting them into pots. Grow these in a pot for 4 weeks before planting them out in a border, incorporating plenty of organic matter and fertiliser to encourage strong development.

How to care for Penstemon

Penstemon are frost hardy, although it is recommended to provide an element of protection during the winter. Leave faded stems and foliage over the winter as this will aid in their development for the following season, protecting them from impending frosty periods, but deadhead spent flowers to lengthen the following flowering period. When spring arrives, cut the old stems to the base and apply a layer of mulch consisting of well-rotted organic matter and fertiliser as this will encourage better flowering.

How to propagate Penstemon

It is possible to propagate Penstemon by softwood cuttings during the early summer or by semi-hardwood cuttings during the midsummer. Alternatively, you may wish to propagate by division during the spring.