

Chrysanthemums - outdoor

Cutting-back and Over-wintering

After flowering, (Usually Late October / Early November) cut back the main stem to about **20cm (8in)** to produce what is known as a stool or rootstock;

On average early chrysanthemums have a hardiness rating of H3 (which has a minimum temperature of -5°C) so, in mild areas, they can be left outside over winter, with a good covering of coarse organic matter such as homemade compost or bark chips used as protective mulch. A well-drained site is preferable;

On cold, exposed or badly drained sites, lift and store the stools over winter in frost-free conditions, such as a frost free greenhouse or a cool, unheated conservatory;

Preparation for overwintering

Lift the shortened plants from the ground or remove from their pots. Ensure that the surplus soil is shaken from the roots;

Tidy up the stools by removing green shoots and leaves leaving just the stems shortened to 8cm (3ins). Then label each stool as they will all look similar at this point;

Place the stools in a shallow tray on top of a **5cm (2in)** layer of multi-purpose compost, ideally peat-free, and then give the roots a light covering of compost once packed in the tray;

Do not water them in and keep them cold but frost free over winter, such as a heated greenhouse or cool conservatory;

Keep the compost just moist through the winter.