

How To Grow Clivias

Position

Filtered light to deep shade. Most clivias need protection from both summer and afternoon sun.

Soil

Clivias are adaptable to most soils, but free-draining soil with added organic matter, such as manure, is ideal. Avoid areas with poor drainage - they may rot.

Pots

Use potting mix with a controlled-release fertiliser. Don't use pot saucers as plants may stay too wet. They'll flower best when they become crowded, and can fill a pot so densely they'll push out the potting mix, yet still perform well.

Watering

Established clumps require little watering. As a rule of thumb, water in spring and summer. Clivias are happy to remain dry in autumn and winter.

Flowering

Most flower in late winter or early spring - some bloom two or more times a year. *Clivia x cyrtanthiflora* flowers in spring and spot-flowers all year.

Feeding and mulching

Apply an organic fertiliser from spring to autumn, or a slow-release product, such as Osmocote Plus for garden beds, in spring. Keep well mulched with organic material like leaf litter, coir, pea straw or lucerne.

Growing from seed

When the fruit is ripe - turns from green to red or yellow - remove seeds from the plant. Clean off fleshy outer layer to leave the small pearl-like seeds. Fill a pot with seed-raising mix or a shallow tray with sphagnum moss, and press seeds into the surface. Water in and keep moist, but not wet, in a warm shady spot. Clivias can take 4-7 years to flower.

Division

Large clumps or crowded potted plants with more than one growth point can be split up. Lift and remove soil from the fleshy roots. Tease out roots, and use a garden knife or sharp spade to divide plants. Make sure each division retains its own mass of roots. Sit plants in a sheltered spot for a couple of hours to let the cuts heal before replanting. Older plants may produce offsets, or pups, from the base. These can be cut off and replanted as long as they have established roots of their own. Larger divided plants will generally flower within two years.