

Primrose

Primroses are one of the most interesting flowers, admired throughout the centuries. Shakespeare wrote about them in "A Midnight's Summer Dream" and they are the subject of many poems. In fact, in the Victorian Era they were among the favorites for the "Language of Flowers". Primrose signified youth, young love, or I can't live without you. Primroses are the subject to countless tales and folklore throughout Europe with stories of Primrose fairy houses and the like. The history of Primroses is just as enchanting as the flowers, so give them a try.

Size: 8" to 3 ft. depending on variety

Exposure: Partial shade in sunny hot, dry areas.

How to Plant: Plant from 4" containers for a good start.

Water needs: regular watering.

Soil: Organic rich, well amended soil and must be well drained.

Pruning needs: Not much pruning, just remove unsightly leaves as needed.

Fertilizing: Fertilize with other annuals and perennials, not heavy feeders.

Snapshot: Primrose comes in an array of colors and sizes. They grow on a rosette shaped plant and typically have a simple five petal flower, but this depends on variety. There are hundreds of varieties, hybrids and selections to choose from. Primrose are amongst some 400 species and prefer the cool, humid Pacific Northwest climate; however they can be grown successfully in our area. In hotter, dryer climates they are often used as an annual, though they are perennial in nature. *Primula Vulgaris* (English Primrose) and *Primula Malacoides* (Fairy Primrose) seem to do well for late winter and spring. Location is the key; if you have a spot that has partial shade or dappled shade on the moist side, they will do well and return the next year. After all, they are native to Europe's colder regions. Keep their roots on the cool side and make sure to amend heavy soils and water regularly.

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12/31/12