



# GROWING ICELAND POPPIES

*Iceland poppies are great as cut flowers or for filling borders with sumptuous bursts of colour. They are a short lived hardy perennial often grown as a biennial here in the UK, flowering from June - August.*

## Seed Sowing

Surface sow into a seed tray in September or Feb/April and barely cover with compost or vermiculite. Bottom water until seeds germinate, then prick out into modules once large enough to handle. They will benefit from bottom heat if sown early.

## Transplanting

Plant out as soon as two true leaves have formed. They do not like root disturbance so handle them gently. Space plants 30cm apart.

## Plant Care

Keep the area weed-free and watered during hot spells. You can mulch around the plants to keep in moisture and prevent weeds. Deadhead to prolong flowering. Iceland poppies are drought tolerant and do best in poor soil.

## Challenges

Generally pest and disease-free, they can usually be left to do their own thing. Some things to look out for are aphids and powdery mildew.

## Harvest

You can expect flowers between June and October. Pick the flowers often to encourage more flowers to form; they should keep flowering from June well into the autumn. Iceland poppies have a short vase life and aren't best suited as cut flowers but will last about 3 days when arranged.

## Culinary Ideas And Uses

No parts of the plant are edible.

## Seed Saving

Iceland poppies will self seed in situ if left to flower and set seed. To harvest the seeds wait until the seed pods turn a dark brown on the plant and begin to rattle. A seam on the seed pod will begin to be visible as they dry. Place in a bag to collect the seeds as the pods open.

Store in a cool dark place; seeds should remain viable for up to 10 years.