A garden that contains a good selection of different bulbs is assured of colour from late winter until summer. Jonquils, lachenalias and crocus in late winter are followed by daffodils, anemones and ranunculi. Spring brings hyacinths, freesias, tritonias and watsonias, and in summer there are callas, lilies and gladioli.

When planting bulbs in the garden they require a well-drained, sandy loam which is not overly rich. You can improve heavy soils by adding coarse sand or 'Oderings Compost'. 'Tui Bulb Fertiliser' should be incorporated into the soil during preparation and prior to planting (always avoid direct contact between the bulb and fertiliser or fresh manure). The bulbs will also respond well to a feed with a liquid fertiliser as buds start to appear and again after flowers have finished.

Many bulbs will grow to perfection in tubs, pots or troughs, which can be moved around the garden, terrace or balcony. Smaller flowering bulbs such as daffodils, jonquils, hyacinths, bluebells, lachenalias, freesias and tulips can be moved inside as they start to flower. The containers need to be at least 15cm deep to allow for good root growth and always pot up using a bulb potting mix. Plant your bulbs to their required depth and twice as close as you would in the garden. Keep your containers in a cool, shady place until the leaves emerge, then move into a sunny area. To promote earlier flowering on tall strong stems, place the hyacinths, tulips, anemone and ranunculus into the fridge (7-10 degrees) for three to four weeks before planting (Note: bulbs in pots are generally not suitable for reusing next season).

Bulb Planting Guide

Name	Planting Season	Depth cm	Distance cm	Flowering Season
Anemone	Autumn	3	15	Spring Early Summer
Begonia	Spring	Note A	In pots	Spring
Bluebells	Autumn	7	10	Summer
Calla	Late Autumn-Winter	10	20	summer
Canna	Winter-Early spring	5	50	summer
Crocus	Autumn	5	10	Late Winter-Early Spring
Daffodil	Autumn	12	10-15	Spring
Dahlia	Spring	7	30	Summer-Autumn
Freesia	Autumn	7	7	Spring
Fritillaria	Autumn	10	30	Spring
Gladiolus	Late Winter-Spring	10	20	Summer
Grape Hyacinth	Autumn	7	10	Spring
Hippeastrum	Winter	Note A	35	Late Spring-Summer
Hyacinth	Autumn	Note A	15	Spring
Ixia	Autumn	7	10	Spring
Jonquil	Autumn	10	10	Late Winter-Early Spring
Lachenalia	Autumn	7	10	Spring
Lillium	Late Autumn-Winter	10	35	Summer
Lily of the valley	Winter	3	10	Late Spring
Ranunculus	Autumn	3	15	Spring
Snowdrop	Autumn	7	10	Spring
Snowflake	Autumn	7	10	Spring
Sparaxis	Autumn	7	10	Spring
Tulip	Autumn	12	12	Spring
Watsonia	Autumn	7	30	Spring

Note A=Plant with top of the bulb at the soil surface or slightly above.

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