

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Xeranthemum

Xeranthemum is most commonly known as the "mum," and it is an excellent, easy-to-grow option for beginning gardeners. These flowers are seen most often in the fall time, but they can also be an excellent flower for the spring. They come in a very large variety of colors and can be propagated in several ways.

To plant:

Mums are easy to grow from seed, division or cuttings, which makes it an excellent flower for gardeners to try to grow from seed. Mums do have a long growing seasons, so if starting from seed, plant the seeds indoors six to eight weeks before the last frost date. Once the mums reach a height of six to eight inches, you can transplant them outdoors.

Since mums do have a long growth period, they can be grown from cuttings, which is the quickest way to start a mum. Take a cutting from the mum plant in the spring or summer by using a sharp and sterile knife to remove a 3-inch section of new growth at the end of a stem. Pull the leaves off the bottom inch and then insert the stem into peat moss or perlite. Keep the cutting moist at all times, but make sure it isn't waterlogged.

Mums also can be planted through divisions, and the plants actually do best when divided every three to four years anyway. Do this in the spring when the plant begins to form new growth. Dig up the root ball and cut the ball into several sections. You can then plant each separate section.



[Xeranthemum seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

To grow:

Mums grow best in a fully sunny area with soil that drains well. Leave enough space between each plant, at least 6 to 12 inches worth, and water the mums frequently. Since mums can be grown as perennials, when winter arrives, cover the plants with several inches of mulch. Cut the stems back in the spring. When the mums bloom in the spring, you can pinch them back and this will help encourage more blooms in the fall.

To harvest:

Mums make excellent cut flowers to display in a vase indoors. Cut the flowers in the early morning or later in the evening, because this is when the flowers are fully hydrated. The best cut flowers are the ones in which the bloom has not yet fully opened. Make sure you cut the stems a little longer than needed so you can re-cut them later on.

What Xeranthemum craves:

Fertilize mums with nitrogen and potassium, but be sure to do so before the flowering



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phase. Start the feeding cycle between March and May, and feed the plants until June or July. You can also apply a one-time, slow-release fertilizer in March.

Where to buy Xeranthemum seeds:

You can find Xeranthemum seeds on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Xeranthemum seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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