

## Jenny Rose Carey @ Northwest Flower and Garden Show

### PRO-TIPS – Summer and Autumn Bulbs – February 20<sup>th</sup> 2026

Summer and Autumn bulbs are underappreciated garden plants. They add beauty and diversity to your summer garden with their diverse, colorful flowers and dramatic leaves.

These warm-season bulbs come from tropical and subtropical areas of the world, so they will only begin to grow after the soil and air temperatures warm up. Add some to your gardens and containers in spring, after the last frost to please you, and your pollinators.

They are easy to grow if you follow some **simple guidelines**:

- Plan where you want to plant summer bulbs before you buy them
- Questions to ask yourself – Am I planting in the ground or in containers?
- Is the position in sun or shade?
- Do I have access to a hose/watering can for watering? Many bulbs are thirsty!
- What colors/ shapes/ favorites do I like?
- Buy or order them now so that you get the best choice of bulbs (vendors at the show)
- To get an early start with your summer bulbs, start them on a windowsill or somewhere warm indoors – about four to six weeks before your last frost date.
- Pot the bulbs up in free draining potting soil. Keep the potting soil moist but not wet. When the first shoots emerge from the bulb – increase the light levels.
- Move the bulbs outside to acclimatize as soon as the soil and air are consistently above 60 degrees day and night – find a protected, shady area.
- After a week of tender loving care, they can be planted in soil, raised beds or containers. Add extra grit or gravel to the soil to increase drainage.
- At this time, you can also plant bulbs directly outside (if you didn't start them inside)
- Once the soil warms up, these bulbs grow rapidly. Give them plenty of compost in the soil, lots of water, and some low concentration organic fertilizer every other week especially if bulbs are growing in containers (I like fish emulsion that is diluted to half strength).
- Maintenance involves deadheading, trimming off old leaves, staking if needed, and enjoying them in your garden!
- Dig up the bulbs in the fall to bring indoors and save for next year
- For winter storage they need a frost-free area. I wrap them in newspaper and store in a crate or box. If they are growing in a container, I cut back the top growth and bring the whole thing into my garage. I check watering every week. They need to be moist but not wet.

## Jenny Rose Carey's Top 10 Summer and Autumn Flowering Bulbs

### Listed Alphabetically

1. Begonia
2. Caladium
3. Canna
4. Dahlia
5. Elephant Ears
6. Eucomis
7. Gladiolus
8. Iris
9. Liatris
10. Lilies

Find out more about all of these bulbs and many more for spring in my book–

### ***The Essential Guide to Bulbs, 2025, Timber Press***

And at my website [jennyrosecarey.com](http://jennyrosecarey.com)

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Happy Gardening

Jenny Rose Carey