



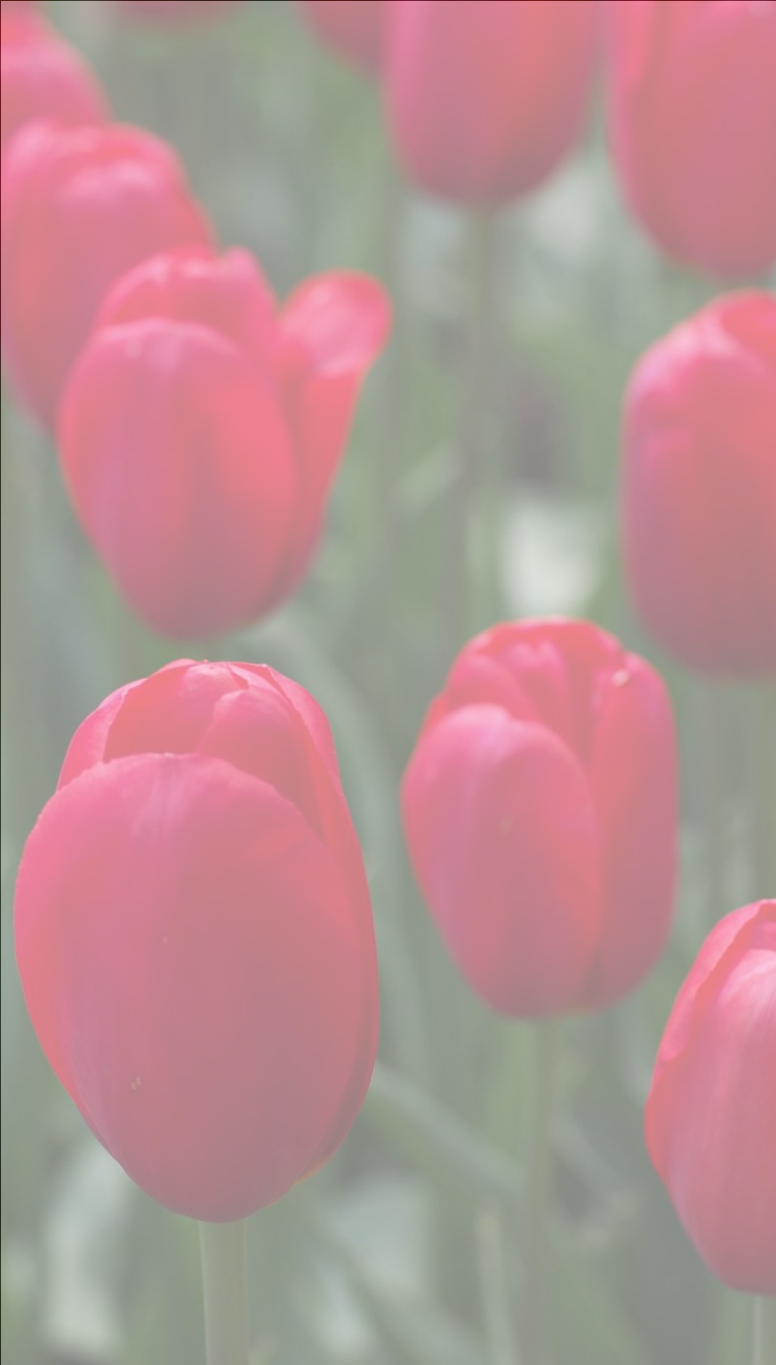
Forcing Bulbs

Forcing bulbs sounds a bit violent, doesn't it? But it's little more than a bit of sleight of hand! When you "force" a bulb, you are tricking it into thinking winter is over and spring is here. Then, your bulb will begin to grow and give you flowers ahead of schedule!

Some bulbs that people usually choose to force are:

- ▷ Amaryllis
- ▷ Crocus
- ▷ Daffodils
- ▷ Tulips

In this guide, we'll discuss a couple of the ways you can force a bulb. Have any questions? Give our team a call at 615-867-7121!



Prechilling

Most bulbs, with some exceptions such as amaryllis and paperwhite, will need to be chilled for 10-12 weeks in your refrigerator's vegetable drawer or an unheated garage. Keep this in mind if you are wanting blooms by a certain time. Each bulb will also require a different minimum amount of chilling – check the directions provided for your chosen varieties.

Place each bulb variety in a separate paper bag. Make sure your bags are labeled so that you know what's inside when you are ready to plant.

If you are prechilling in the fridge, make sure there is no fresh fruit inside the fridge with the bulbs. Fruit releases ethylene gas, which could cause the bulbs to rot.

If you are prechilling in the garage, watch out for rodents! Mice and rats will eat most bulbs, though some are poisonous to them.



Forcing *in* Water

Step 1. Fill a glass vase with about 2-3 inches of rocks or glass beads in the bottom.

Step 2. After your bulbs have prechilled (as needed), place them on top of the rocks or beads. You do not need to dig the bulbs in, just simply rest them on top. Keep them close together to have a more eye-catching arrangement. The mature flowers can also better help support each other if they are close together.

Step 3. Add water. Only fill the vase with enough water to reach the base. Do not submerge the bulbs.

Step 4. Place the vase in a cool, dark area for 4-8 weeks. Check on them occasionally and add water as needed to reach the bulbs' base.

Step 5. When roots and leaves have begun to grow, move the vase to a bright window!



Forcing *in* Soil

Step 1. Choose a container that allows for about 3-4" below the bulbs so that the roots have enough room to grow. The pot should also have a drainage hole so that water doesn't pool and cause the bulbs to rot.

Step 2. Fill your container with a well-draining potting mix. Don't use soil from your garden.

Step 3. Plant your bulbs halfway into the soil. The bulbs' pointy tops should be poking out of the soil. Then, water them thoroughly.

Step 4. Keep your planted bulbs in a cool, dark area until they begin to form leaves. Check on them occasionally and add water as needed.

Step 5. When leaves have appeared, move the pot to a bright window.

Tips *for* Blooming Success

- ▷ Choose a bulb that is plump and firm. The larger the bulb is, the larger the flower will be.
- ▷ Forced bulbs can be planted in the garden after the last frost is over. However, they may not bloom well again for at least two years. There is also a chance they may not bloom ever again. But, you can add forced bulbs to your compost pile so that they can provide nutrients to other plants in your garden!

Additional Resources

Forcing Bulbs – It's Easier Than You Think from White Flower Farm

<https://www.whiteflowerfarm.com/blog/index.php/2017/11/21/forcing-bulbs-its-easier-than-you-think/>



Martin's Home & Garden

1020 Northwest Broad Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37129

(615) 867-7121

www.martinshomeandgarden.com