



# Papaver Somniferum

Annual poppies can be very challenging to grow, depending on your climate. Instructions based on growing zone are enclosed below. You can Google your zip code along with "growing zone" to see which of these apply to your use case.

Please note that not all zones are created equal. What is listed below is a general guide. There are parts of the Midwest, NE and desert like areas in the west, in zones 5-7, that get very hot summers and there are parts of OR, WA AND CA, particularly on the Pacific coast, in zones 8-10 that have very cool weather, where these can be grown nearly year round. The most important factor to be mindful of, is the temperatures needed for germination and growing. Poppies like cool but not cold, but they can handle light frost.

Zones 3-7 Sow in spring when all danger of frost has passed. You can even sow in summer, you just won't get to enjoy them quite as long although they LOVE cool weather and will continue to flourish and bloom even in light frosts.

Zones 8: Plant in spring or fall.

Zones 9A: Plant between October and March.

Zones +9B: Yes, you can grow these! However, you must plant in November or December, January at the very latest. Any later and they will germinate but you will sadly watch them wither



and die as the days get warmer in March and April. In my zone, 10A, November is the "magic month."

Optimal germination is between 46 and 80 degrees. Optimal growing temperatures are between 50-77 degrees although they can handle cooler than this, they will just grow slower. You can check your highs and lows by month to determine the best time to plant for your climate. Too much hotter than these temperatures and they may or may not germinate and will not do well. Poppies need at least 90 days from sprout to flower.

POPPIES REQUIRE 30 DAYS OF DRY-COLD STRATIFICATION, SO THEY CAN SIMPLY BE STORED IN A REFRIGERATOR FOR 30 DAYS. MY SEEDS ARE PRE-COLD STRATIFIED AND READY TO PLANT, UNLESS THE PACKET INDICATES OTHERWISE.

If waiting to plant until your temperatures are right, continue to store them in cold storage. You can keep them in the food-grade bag I sent them in, place that in a mason jar and then a paper bag to block light and place them in your refrigerator. They will keep from 2-5 years this way.

Poppies prefer NOT to be fertilized. They are accustomed to growing in poor soils with low nutrients.

Poppies have a very high germination rate (as long as conditions are right). Plant them assuming they will all sprout, as thinning them typically results in plant loss as they detest having their roots disturbed. Pulling up adjacent plants can result in losing all of them. The general recommended spacing is 6 inches but I prefer 8-12 inches to allow them to meet their full potential in flower size. Plant the seeds where you want them to stay. Poppies do not transplant well. You can start them in a large pot that you intend to keep them in or directly in the ground (ideal). Use of regular starter pots is discouraged, as they will likely not survive a transplant. Biodegradable peat pots can be used, so that transferal into the ground includes the pot as well as the plant, and avoids disturbing the roots. This is what I do.

#### In a pot:

Poppies prefer to be in the ground but can successfully be grown in pots, just make sure the pot is deep as poppy roots run deep. Fill a pot (the bigger the better,) with potting soil and wet the soil before planting so seeds are not washed away. Press the seeds into the soil lightly, so they are only about 1/8 of an inch deep. Wet the soil very lightly with a hose on the mist setting or a hand pump sprayer. Water daily. Keep soil moist but not wet. Keep in full sun. Seeds will sprout in as little as 1-2 weeks. The seedlings will eventually look like lettuce.

#### In the ground:

Choose a site that gets full sun. Clear an area of any weeds. Prepare the bed with a layer of garden soil. Wet the soil first. Press the seeds into the soil. Water daily and a little more than you would in pots. Keep moist but not wet. These are accustomed to growing in poor soils and prefer to NOT be fertilized. They will get what they need from the potting/garden soil. These love cool weather and will last all the way up until your first hard freeze. You can collect the seeds from the seed pods after they dry on the plant and store them in your refrigerator (with the method stated above) for planting the following spring although they have a tendency to re-seed very easily and come up

on their own. In most cooler climates, you only need to plant these once as long as you let the pods dry on the plant and fall off to re-seed. The seeds can survive freezing temperatures and will normally "pop" back up every spring!

My seeds, bulbs and bare root plants are guaranteed to provide you with a decent yield. If you are dissatisfied with your order for any reason or the seeds don't sprout, please message me before leaving a review and I will provide advice, replace or refund. I truly care about my customers and my plants!

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Happy Planting!

Kimberly

