



# How to Force your Bulbs



Here's what you'll need for your spring in the winter: Bulbs, containers, soil .

**Containers**– Any type of container will work as long as it has drainage holes in it and you have a place to put it in cold storage for 12-20 weeks. Use ones that work best with your décor. Try something fun, like coffee cans, and old boot. A shallow container or bulb pans work very well.

- **Soil**– Use a good potting mix with some worm casting added for a natural nutrient boost when the bulbs need it.
- **Planting**– Fill the pots partially with soil. Lay the bulbs on top of the soil, point side up. Place the bulbs as close as you can get them in the pots. Note: Tulips should be planted with the flat sides facing the pot. That way the leaves will be on the outside and the flowers in the middle. Then pack more soil around the bulbs so that just the tips are showing.
- **Water and label pots**– Water the containers thoroughly either slowly from the top or set it in a pan of water so that the soil soaks up the water. Label the pots if you planted specific colors for certain areas of your home.
- **Cold storage** - You now need to put the pots in a period of cold storage. Temperatures should be in the 35-50 degree range. The bulbs need at least 10 to 15 weeks depending on the bulbs. Note: Do not put bulbs in the frig. with onions or any fruit especially apples. They give off ethylene gas which sterilizes the bulbs so they don't bloom.
- **Flowering**– After the bulbs have been in the frig. for the correct amount of time, bring them out. Put them in a cool (60\*) dark spot for about a week or until you see some growth. Then put into a warm bright spot. If they need water give them some it this time.
- **After Flowering**– Keep the plant growing, cut the flower stalk of and let the leaves die down naturally. You can plant them outside either in the spring or wait until fall. It really takes a lot out of them when they are forced. Personally I would just throw them out. It will take them a long time to recover after planting outside.

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## Bulb Chart for Forcing

Type	Weeks for Chilling	Weeks to Bloom
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<u>Hyacinths-</u>	<u>11-14</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>Tulips-</u>	<u>14-20</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>Daffodils-</u>	<u>15-17</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>Crocus-</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>Iris-</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>Muscari- (Grape Hyacinths)</u>	<u>13-15</u>	<u>2-3</u>