

## Gardeners Plant Impatiens for Summer Flowers in Shade and Sun

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Impatiens Super Elfin Blue Pearl Complements Tradescantia Zebrina Hanging From a Pot -  
*Chris Eirschele*

Annual impatiens plants are common in shade gardens. Loved for the mass of summer flowers, impatiens grow in sunny landscapes and containers too.

Even before the photo in 1999, seen in *Window Boxes Indoors & Out*, of an old metal bread box planted with [rex begonias](#), lobelia and pink New Guinea impatiens, gardeners knew impatiens were more than an annual plant for a shady landscape. Gardeners have grown impatiens in part sun and container gardens with little fanfare for years.

As a colorful edger along the planting bed canopied by an aging tree, it typifies the classic use for even most seasoned gardeners. But beyond the simplistic choice of *Impatiens wallerana*, shade gardeners search to use this annual plant in other ways. It is for them that sun impatiens or plants with variegated foliage will satisfy.

### Summer Gardens Mixed with Impatiens Flowers

A garden in the shade mixed with impatiens flowers, [plantain lilies](#) and feathery perennial ferns make a pretty summer landscape. Tall deciduous trees under-planted with impatiens will provide high impact color where very little light finds its way through the thick canopy.

In the urban garden environment, impatiens flowers fit into the crooks and crannies between concrete and iron structures. The plants' rounded habit softens hardscapes easily and with little expense.

Containers filled with flowers of impatiens will make an attractive garden. Gardeners grow white flowering impatiens planted against a background of a dark leaved coleus or a mix of impatiens with a favorite colored tuberous begonia and sweet alyssum. Whatever the choice, a summer garden planted with impatiens will last until the cold autumn returns.

### Groundcover Impatiens Wallerana Fits Shady Locations

*Impatiens wallerana* is the commonly used annual plant for shady locations. Although this species will tolerate part shade, it will require protection in a western facing garden. Plant growth ranges from 6" – 18" tall and will spread 12" – 24" wide. Although not thought of as a trailing

plant, in a hanging basket impatiens will spill over its edges. Flower forms are grown with single and double petals.

The easily grown groundcover will attract butterflies and hummingbirds to gardens with colors as diverse as purple and orange. The 8” tall hybrid, *Impatiens* ‘Wild Thing,’ is indicative of the intense colors these blooms can bring to a garden, magenta and orange aging to hues of burgundy, salmon and dusty rose.

### **Impatiens Made for Half Shade Half Sun**

The New Guinea impatiens was developed to satisfy gardeners who have too much half-sun or too little half-shade for *Impatiens wallerana* plants to thrive. Botanically *Impatiens hawkerii*, New Guinea impatiens will tolerate morning sun, less from a day-long westerly direction, and does need consistent watering to keep healthy.

The flowers of New Guinea impatiens have single-petaled large flower forms and leaves of a sharply triangular shape that has a bronzed green coloring. Colors out in 2012, of the Infinity® in salmon bisque and lavender are touched by a white eye on a plant 10” – 14” tall. The Celebrette series are shorter plants with colors of orange stripe and orchid star.

In 2011, [American Garden Awards competition](#), *Impatiens* x hybrid ‘SunPatiens® Variegated Spreading White’ is among the nominations. This impatiens works in a hot summer garden. A 20” tall and 18” wide plant, it thrives in hot sun, withstands heat and humidity and does not die off until the first hard frost. *Impatiens* ‘SunPatiens® Variegated Spreading White’ is a high impact plant made up of large white flowers and a backdrop of variegated foliage. Planted alone in a pot, the long leaves each with a yellow center and dark green margins, makes a dramatic display.

### **Flower and Foliage Impatiens**

There are many types of flowers and foliage found in the genus *Impatiens* that can be planted in a summer garden. Choosing the right variety for a particular location is part of ensuring success gardening. *Impatiens repens* is primarily a foliage plant made up of tiny leaves and purple stems, which will spread. This trailing habit makes it a good spiller in a container garden.

The flowers of impatiens and vinca annuals have very similar forms. But, it is the leaves and growth habits of each, which helps gardeners to identify one from the other. [Annual vinca flowers](#) will grow in continually hot summer gardens where less rainfall is available and has an upright appearance in the garden.

Read more at Suite101: [Gardeners Plant Impatiens for Summer Flowers in Shade and Sun | Suite101.com](#) <http://www.suite101.com/content/gardeners-plant-impatiens-for-summer-flowers-in-shade-and-sun-a378051#ixzz1TE5PyBNg>