

# The Good Seed: Make A Splash With Cool Wave Pansies!

Posted by: Lynn Coulter on August 17th, 2012 | 54 Comments



These colorful pansies, a variety called 'Violet Wing,' are the newest members of the Wave family. Wave petunias debuted in 1995 and won an All American Selections Award for outstanding performance in the garden. The new pansies are just as easy to grow. Image by Ball Horticultural Company.

When autumn arrives, the colors in our gardens change. Flashy flowers that bloomed hot pink or tangerine orange start to fade, and trees stop making chlorophyll, the pigment that makes their leaves look so gloriously green. Gardeners who live where the trees turn gold, scarlet, and purple-red get a reprieve, but when the leaves drop, the garden party ends until spring. At least, it used to end.

Not anymore. There's a fresh wave of color for fall gardens: new Cool Wave Pansies. They're arriving in Home Depot stores this fall, bringing a fresh palette of colors to plant.

If "Cool Wave" sounds familiar, it's probably because you've already grown Wave Petunias, the original Wave plants. Wave petunias were introduced in 1995 and soon earned a prestigious All American Selections award for outstanding performance in the garden. Developed in Japan, by the Ball Horticultural Company, they're vigorous, spreading plants that are great for planting as ground covers or in flower beds. They're my favorite flowers for hanging baskets and [window boxes](#), because their long, sturdy stems trail gracefully over the edges of containers.

The new Wave pansies are going to be just as versatile, because they're also carefree, fast-growing plants. Put them in a bare spot or problem area and they'll spread like crazy, (twice as much as regular pansies, according to the developers), carpeting the ground. Pansies like loose dirt that's slightly acidic (a pH of 6.0 to 6.2), so you may need to use soil [amendments](#). A [soil test kit](#) will help you determine what you need.

Since the stems of Wave pansies are long enough to trail, they're also great for [hanging baskets](#). To keep the blooms coming, fertilize them regularly with a fertilizer like [Miracle-Gro All Purpose Plant Food 15-30-15](#). (You can also plant pansies in very early spring in most areas. To learn more, check out our video on [planting in spring](#).)



**Cool Wave pansies trail over the edges of pots and planters, so they're great for hanging baskets. If you live where the winters are mild, your pansies will bloom through the winter and into spring. In other areas, the plants will flower through the fall and green up again next spring.** Image, Ball Horticultural Company.

## Tips For Growing Pansies In Northern Gardens:

Wave Pansies are cold hardy through USDA zone 5. Gardeners in cold climates can pile dry leaves, straw, or other kinds of [mulch](#) around the plants to help protect them during the winter.

For a blast of early spring color, fill a flower bed or container of Wave Pansies with spiky grasses, Dianthus, Sweet alyssum, and other cool-season plants. They'll bloom from early spring until hot weather arrives. When the temperatures start to rise, pull out the pansies and replace them with Wave Petunias, which can take more heat. Wave petunias have also been bred to withstand the rains that often come with spring and summer.

Don't worry if your pansies look a little bedraggled after a harsh winter, particularly if they've been blanketed in snow and ice. They'll green up and start to bloom once spring arrives.

## Tips For Growing Pansies In Southern Gardens:

Fall is an ideal time to plant pansies, while the soil is still warm, the days are balmy, and the night temperatures are cooling down.

Keep your pansies **watered** for the first few weeks, or until they've had time to establish strong root systems. This is especially important if your fall weather is sunny but dry.

Feed your pansies with liquid fertilizer when you plant them and again every two weeks, until the first hard frost of the season. Resume fertilizing when they green up in spring.

Your pansies will bloom in the fall and recover from most cold snaps. Deep south gardeners will have blooms throughout the winter and spring, until the temperatures begin to soar in summer.

## How To Use Your Pansies



**To make a pumpkin planter, hollow out a pumpkin, fill it with soil, and plant Cool Wave pansies. When the pumpkin is finished, move the pansies to another container or into the garden. You can also make the planter by inserting a plastic pot planted with pansies.** Image, Ball Horticultural Company.

Now that we've got Wave pansies coming to our gardens, we're finding all kinds of fun ways to plant them. Try one of these ideas:

- Autumn is the time to plant **spring bulbs** like daffodils, tulips, crocus, and hyacinths. Put them in a spot that gets at least a half-day of sun. Then plant Cool Waves in front of the bulbs or between them. The pansies will bloom through the fall and again next spring, when the bulbs emerge, so you'll double your springtime show.
- Decorate your porch or deck with planters or window boxes. Cool Wave pansies look great with mums, lavender, Gaillardia, Coreopsis, ornamental peppers, and Celosia.

- **Plant pansies in a hollowed-out pumpkin.** Try three small pumpkins in a row on a table, or a large pumpkin on your porch. Use floral “picks,” available from arts and crafts stores, to add orange, purple, green, and black accents for Halloween. Remove the picks later to enjoy your pumpkin into Thanksgiving.
- When you’re hosting a football party, pair up Cool Wave pansies and other cool season varieties in your favorite team’s colors. Vikings fans can use Cool Wave ‘Yellow’ and ‘Violet Wing.’ I’m a fan of a collegiate team, the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets, so I’ll mix ‘White’ and ‘Yellow.’ Rooting for the Browns? Carve an orange pumpkin and add a brown cool-season grass, Wave ‘White’ pansies and a flag with the team’s logo.

#### **Cool Wave Pansy Colors:**

‘White’ – Snowy-white blooms are accented with yellow throats.

‘Frost’ – This white-as-frost pansy is edged with violet. The flowers have yellow throats and dark purple markings on each “face.”

‘Mix’ – For a sampler of all the new Wave colors, choose this mix of ‘Yellow,’ ‘Frost,’ ‘White,’ and ‘Violet Wing.’

‘Violet Wing’ – Add drama to beds and borders with this bi-colored pansy. It’s a bold combination of dark purple and white, with a yellow throat and lavender markings.

‘Yellow’ – Maple leaves, which turn buttery-yellow in autumn, have nothing on this pansy’s bright, clear color.

**Where are you planting pansies this fall? Tell us how you’re using new Wave pansies in a pumpkin, flower bed, or container. Got a question about fall flowers? Post it in our [Garden Club Forum!](#)**