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Buying better impatiens

By — **Adrian Higgins**, Published: May 18

Old-fashioned garden impatiens perform well enough, but breeders have been working on advances, and they are worth seeking out for a better or different show.

Improved varieties. Impreza impatiens — varieties such as Impreza Violet — have been developed to spread and form a lower-growing mound than is typical while providing more blooms per plant. Patchwork is a series with large blooms and flowers that form star patterns. The flowers also lighten as they age, forming a tapestry of color.

Double-flowering impatiens. These are among the recent advances and offer a mound of blooms that resemble miniature roses. Introduced by [Ball Horticultural](#), Fiesta is a series of more than two dozen compact double-flowering impatiens in various shades. Several are striped bicolors, giving a novel effect. [Rockapulco](#), by [Proven Winners](#), is a double-flowered series with more than half a dozen varieties, including versions in white, orange, red and shades of pink.

New Guinea impatiens. These are larger in leaf, flower and plant size but typically with fewer blooms. Some have striking leaves, long, narrow and dark with variegated centers. New Guinea hybrids will take brighter light conditions than other impatiens, though they benefit from afternoon shade in our hot climate and do best in the shade garden. Proven Winners offers a series named [Infinity](#).

Growing tip. Impatiens are thirsty plants, so set them in deep, rich soil and give them plenty of moisture. Watering needs increase in containers and become onerous in hanging baskets.

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