

Gladiolus

(Gladiolus sp.)

Soil: Average to dry

Light: Full sun

Planting Depth: 2 to 6 inches

Planting Distance: 5 to 6 inches

The sophisticated gladiolus is actually no snob. It grows well in many places-- clumps or rows--and need not be started indoors. You can choose varieties in almost any color but true blue. Some are ruffled. Many have contrasting eyes. Or try novel miniatures.

Comments

Begin planting the bulb-like corms in spring as early as the ground can be worked. Count on 65 to 100 days from time of planting to bloom. Stretch the flowering season over several months by planting some corms every two weeks until the middle of July. Each planting of glads will bloom for about two weeks. Some varieties are called "early" or "fast-maturing" in the catalogs. They should be planted first and last.

If soil is poor, work in a complete fertilizer. Mulch to keep roots cool. A side-dressing of plant food, plus ample water applied at flowering time, helps produce a good growth of foliage to feed next year's corm.

Flowers can be cut when the lowest buds start to open. Always let at least four leaves remain behind on the stalk.

Dig glads six to eight weeks after last blooms fade and foliage matures. Late bloomers may still be green until after the first frost, so wait until then to dig. Cut tops to within a few inches of the corm. Place each variety in a separate box or porous sack. Cure in a well-ventilated place for two or three weeks at 75 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Before placing the corms in winter storage, dust them lightly with an all-purpose garden or rose dust, and break off the tops.

Corms can be stored in old nylon hose or onion bags hung in a place that stays near 35 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit.