

## Anemones and Ranunculus

The best value-for-money bulbs available, anemones and ranunculus flower for an extended period each spring. They are among the earliest bulbs available each year, reflecting more their Northern Hemisphere source than any special requirement for early planting.

A few simple tips can help ensure successful growing and a great flower display.

### Planting – when and how

Anemones and ranunculus can be planted any time from mid January until mid May. Early planting will provide welcome mid to late winter flowers, while later planting will give early to mid spring flowers. Partial shade is tolerated, and can help produce longer flower stems.

When purchased, both anemones and ranunculus will be hard and dry, as they are in a very dormant state. To help break their dormancy and ensure reliable germination and flower production, anemone corms should be refrigerated for six weeks prior to planting. Ranunculus tubers require only four weeks. Put them in the fridge in a paper bag, not an airtight container.

Anemone corms will generally have a cone shape, and the point of this should be planted downwards.



The small tuft visible on the wide flat end is not last year's roots, but the remains of last year's flower stem.

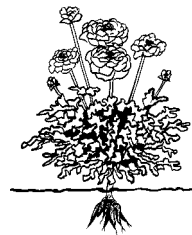
Ranunculus tubers consist of a number of claws connected to a central crown at the top. The claws should be planted downwards.



After refrigeration, soak the corms and tubers for a few hours in tepid water to rehydrate them and plant them out into a well-drained mixture in seed trays.

Keep moist, but do not overwater. Transplant out when the plants are 3–4 cm high.

### Care while growing



Anemones and ranunculus like to be well fertilised while growing. Either a general purpose fertiliser or a specific bulb fertiliser would be quite suitable. Composted animal manure is also good. Water to keep just moist, not wet.

Do not let ranunculus plants become too dry, as this will cause the older leaves to die back quickly, leaving the plants looking rather straggly.

### Flowering

Kept adequately watered with a little fertiliser applied every month, the plants will produce flowers over a period of several months. Ranunculus flowers are long lasting in the vase and should be picked when the flower heads have half unfurled from their tight bud stage. Anemones will have a longer vase life if they have been through two or three opening and closing (day and night) cycles on the plant before cutting.

### Care after flowering

With warmer temperatures in late spring, the plants will begin to die back. The corms and tubers can be harvested and reused the next year, but the tubers available for sale are younger with more vigour and will give better results.

