

## About hanging baskets

To fully enjoy your hanging basket there are a few simple guidelines to follow to ensure success.

## Positioning the basket

It may be very tempting to buy a big basket (16" or 18") for your place but please check you have a bracket that is big enough (hanging baskets don't like sitting next to a wall), and it is securely fixed to take the weight. A 16" basket fully watered can be very heavy (15 kilos). Avoid very windy areas as this can dry out the basket quicker than being in full sun. Make sure the basket has at least half a day's sun to encourage good flowering and growth. Try and avoid putting baskets somewhere where they may be bashed by passing people too.

## Watering often and thoroughly

Plants in containers generally need to be watered more often than if they were growing in the ground. This is especially true for hanging baskets because they are subject to drying winds.

Reach up and lift the pot from below; if it feels light, it probably needs water. Put your finger one inch into the soil; if it is dry at that depth, water. In most areas you should expect to water hanging plants everyday, or even twice a day. Water should stream from the drainage holes when you water. Please don't assume rain will water baskets, it will barely water the surface!! If your basket dries out a bit then water it, leave it for an hour then water again. When compost dries it will try and resist water (a bit like surface tension).



To break this down water heavily for a couple of days and hopefully they will come back. If your going away and can't get someone to water them, put them on the ground in a watertight tray with a few inches of water. This will keep a basket going for a few days. Don't forget to hang them up when you get back!!

## Deadhead blooming plants

As flowers fade and die, remove them by pinching them off where they meet the stem. This promotes the formation of new flowers. Otherwise the plant may put its energy into creating seed.

## Feed

Like all of us, plants need food to grow and be healthy. We put a 4 month controlled release fertilizer in our compost, which should last until about the middle of July. In the summer, especially when its hot you'll be watering frequently, nutrients will leave the potting mix quickly. Feed the plants with a liquid fertilizer or a dry slow-release fertilizer (not both). Follow the directions for amount and frequency. Feed when the soil is moist, and never when plants are wilting.



# Advice Sheet

## Hanging baskets continued

### Cut back leggy plants

If the plants start to look straggly, don't be afraid to cut them back. Most common hanging plants, such as verbena, petunias and impatiens, will produce denser new growth.

### Pests

It's surprising how slugs and snails can get into a basket, but it has been known! The best and safest method is to pick them out (especially in the evening) and put them where the birds will eat them. Throwing snails away can work but they have a homing instinct!! Leaves that look cut have probably been attacked by caterpillars. Be careful how you handle these, a pair of gloves would be best. Ants can be another problem, it might be an idea to put something very sticky on the bracket to stop them moving onto the baskets.

### Finally...

Don't forget to take a picture of your basket in bloom. It's a nice memory and you will have a good pic of your place in full summer bloom for future reference

### For further help and advice

Please come into the nursery (with pictures if you have them) and we will be happy to advise you further, or ask your question on Facebook.

