



## How to Handle and Plant Bare Root Perennials

### **Planting:**

#### **When to Plant:**

Now, ideally. Bare root plants are happiest in the ground. They should be planted as soon as possible. If immediate planting is not possible, see the storage tips below.

Unlike greenhouse-grown plants, bare-root plants can be planted during cold weather or anytime the soil is not frozen. These are hardy perennials. Cool and damp spring conditions are just what they need to make a smooth transition to a new home.

#### **How to Plant:**

Dig a hole deep enough for the roots to comfortably spread out and/or hang down. A comfortable plant is a happy plant. Fill in around the roots with soil and gently firm them in to settle them in their new home. Try to bring the soil level flush to the top of the crown of the plant, matching the level that the plant previously experienced while growing.

Once planted, water thoroughly. Water is the chicken soup for a newly transplanted perennial's soul. Unless conditions are excessively dry or you have very well drained soil one thorough watering at the time of planting is generally sufficient to send your perennial on its way to new growth.

### **Storage and handling:**

If you are unable to plant right away, it is important to keep your plants happy by meeting their basic needs.

#### **Moisture:**

Happy bare root perennials are stored to keep the roots:

1. Not too dry and desiccating;
2. Not too wet and saturated;
3. Just right (think Goldilocks here), all nice and gently moist.

#### **Temperature and Light:**

Happy bare root perennials like the cool and dark. Ideally, plants should be stored in a refrigerator (34-38° F) before planting. Next best is a cool, shady spot. Warmer temperatures or direct sunlight can cause excessive premature growth or mold in the bag or cause the roots to dry out. Freezing can damage or kill the roots, especially when they've already begun to grow.

#### **Air:**

A happy bare root perennial can breathe, but doesn't like drafts. Don't seal shut the plastic bag. Just leave it loosely shut.