

LOOKING AFTER YOUR PLANTS

Support can be provided by:

- Plastic, wire or wood trellis, in a range of sizes. When fixing to a wall or fence, first attach wooden battens so that there is an air space behind, to help reduce the build-up of pests and diseases.
- Vine eyes hammered or screwed into the wall or fence, no more than 2m apart, with the first line at 50cm above ground level and then others at 40–50cm apart, between which the support wires are stretched horizontally tensioned and secured. Along paneled fencing, the wires can be secured to the fence posts using galvanised staples.
- Individual anchorage points in different designs, secured to the wall or fence at chosen positions to hold the main branches in place. These do not always give the same flexibility and support to help the plant reach its full potential spread and height.
- When growing climbers up large shrubs and trees, ensure that the chosen plant will not overpower the host. Many clematis (except *Clematis montana*) and roses can be used, and wisteria works well for larger trees.
- Plant away from the host plant roots, where adequate moisture is available. Drive a short stake

into the edge of the planting hole and attach string, wire or plastic chain, secured to the lower branches with a plastic strap. The climber is then trained and led into the shrub or tree branches as it grows.

- Tie in and train climbers regularly in summer, using soft string or garden twine to prevent damage (see below).
- Pests and diseases are rarely a problem and controls will be available from your garden centre or nursery.
- Some climbers need cutting back in late autumn or winter if they grow too big. Clematis needs specific care to avoid losing the next year's flowers. Others, such as wisteria, need summer pruning to keep them tidy. Check the label or ask your garden centre or nursery for advice.



TIME-SAVING TIPS

- Water thoroughly twice a week rather than a little every day.
- A layer of compost, bark, cocoa shells or even gravel (mulch) spread around the plants will hold water and nutrients and keep weeds down.
- To make a new climber look more established and natural, trim it back unevenly, leaving some longer shoots (see right).



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Spade
 - Hose or watering can
 - Supports
 - Trellis
 - Compost/bark/cocoa shells
 - Bonemeal when planting in autumn or winter
 - Growmore (spring & summer)
 - Climbing plants
- For more information:
www.rhs.org.uk/advice
www.plantforlife.info

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- HTA Specialist Group – British Rose Growers Association visit www.rosesuk.com
- Tel: 0118 930 3132 or visit www.the-hta.org.uk
- PlantforLife – visit www.plantforlife.info



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THE EASY GUIDE TO

CLIMBING PLANTS



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WHERE DO I START?

Plants that climb or ramble add a vertical dimension to a garden by transforming walls and fences; they will effectively disguise dead trees or stumps, sheds or unsightly areas; they'll happily clamber over trellises; they bring colour to the duller corner or the straggliest thin hedge. Fragrant climbers such as jasmine, scented roses and honeysuckle can help mask the smell of dustbins, while evergreen climbers provide cover all year round.

PLANTING

PREPARATION & PLANTING TIME: 30 MINS

- Remove all weeds and dig in well-rotted farmyard manure, garden compost or planting compost and a handful of fertiliser.
- Climbers can be planted at any time, provided the soil is not too wet or frozen. Deciduous plants will be bare of leaves from late autumn to early spring but can still be planted.
- Before planting, stand your plants in their pots in a bowl of water so that the compost is wet through.
- Plant climbers at least 30-45cm away from a wall or fence, so the roots are not sheltered from rain.
- Dig a hole about twice the size of the pot and fork over the bottom. Place the climbing plant in the hole to check it is big enough.
- Tap the plant out of its pot and place in the hole, loosening the roots slightly. Ensure that the top of the roots are just below soil level. Adjust the supporting cane so that it links the plant with the wall/support.
- Fill in the surrounding hole and firm the soil with your foot. Sprinkle a handful of bonemeal around the plant.
- Water well and keep watering for the next few weeks.
- You can grow climbers in pots, using a triangular trellis, wigwam of canes or obelisk. Place the trellis in the pot before planting the climber, packing compost firmly around the base.



RECOMMENDED PLANTS

Climbing plants vary in how quickly they will cover the space allotted to them. Ivies, for example, often take a year or two to establish before romping away, while honeysuckles grow almost before you've planted them! It is also worth noting that some plants are self-clinging while others need supports to climb up. To help you locate plants easily at your garden centre or nursery the Latin names have been given.

- ROSES:** Climbing and rambling roses are ideal for growing up pillars, arches, pergolas and along fences. Climbers are less prolific but bloom for much of the summer. More vigorous rambling roses only flower once. Tie in leafy stems using garden string.
- 'Aloha' - coral pink climber
 - 'Bantry Bay' - mid pink climber
 - 'Compassion' - apricot climber
 - 'Danse du Feu' - climber; clusters of orange-red flowers
 - 'Golden Showers' - climber; large fragrant golden flowers
 - High Hopes - large pink climber
 - 'New Dawn' - rambler; fragrant shell pink flowers all summer.
 - 'Pink Perpetue' - pink climber
 - 'Rambling Rector' - white rambler
 - 'Rosy Mantle' - pale pink climber
 - 'Sympathie' - mid red climber



- CLEMATIS:** These spectacular flowering climbers like their roots in the shade and their stems and flowers in the sun. Plant *Clematis* several inches lower than it is in its pot and place stones or pieces of broken flower pot over the roots to create shade. Alternatively plant a bushy shrub nearby.
- *Clematis montana* - masses of white scented flowers in early spring; vigorous grower to 6m
 - 'Dr Ruppel' - large deep pink blooms with a darker stripe during May-July, best in shade
 - 'Etoile Violette' - masses of deep purple blooms
 - 'Marie Boisselot' - pure white
 - 'Nelly Moser' - big stripy blooms



HONEYSUCKLES:

Rather than being trained too severely, honeysuckles are best left to scramble. They grow pretty well anywhere!

Lonicera periclymenum 'Belgica' (early Dutch) - white-purple flowers during early summer, very fragrant. 5 x 3m
Lonicera japonica (Japanese honeysuckle) - yellow flowers in summer, best in shade, evergreen. 3 x 2.5m. 'Halliana' is long-blooming.
Lonicera periclymenum 'Serotina' (late Dutch) - cream/red flowers.



HYDRANGEA: *Hydrangea anomala* subsp. *petiolaris* is ideal for shady walls or sunny sites in moist soils. Its white lacecap flowers in summer are up to 25cm across.

IVIES: Self-clinging, evergreen ivies thrive in shade and drought, but avoid boggy conditions. *Hedera helix* 'Goldheart' has gold variegated leaves. 6 x 6m

JASMINUM NUDIFLORUM:

The winter jasmine has bright yellow flowers from November to February. 3 x 3m

WISTERIA: Mauve, violet or white clusters of flowers in early summer, followed by the foliage. Ideal trained to a house wall or left to scramble through large trees.



PARTHENOCISSUS: Vigorous climbers known as Boston ivy or Virginia creeper, these are wonderful foliage plants. Grow against a wall or through shrubs in dappled shade for the deepest red hues in autumn.

