



OSU Extension Center
Tulsa County Master Gardener
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A Z A L E A S

Planting Instructions

1. Select a place where water never stands and preferably which is shaded during part of the day. Avoid low spots. Avoid soggy spots from dripping faucets and dripping air conditioners. Avoid where water will run-off from the roof or guttering. Azaleas need deep well drained soil.
2. Dig a hole 9 inches deep, and 18 inches in diameter and fill the hole with 1/3 Composted Pine Bark, 1/3 Peat Moss, 1/3 Native Soil.
3. Wet mixture thoroughly.
4. Remove azalea from container and break, tear or slash the root ball so pot-bound roots will start growing away from ball.
5. Dig a smaller hole in the mix and put in the azalea.
6. Tap thoroughly to remove pockets and to insure contact between roots and mixture. The azalea has tight, tough roots, you needn't be gentle.
7. Check to make sure the azalea is not lower in the bed than it was in original planting or container
8. Apply a layer of mulch to keep plant roots from drying out too quickly and blowing away. Don't overdo – you might smother the plant.
9. Wait at least one month to fertilize if planted in spring. Do not fertilize after August 1st.

*This simple method is okay for sandy or intermediate soils.
It is unsatisfactory for black gumbo soil.
For better results, ask for detailed procedures.*

Care of Azaleas

1. **WATER THOROUGHLY** about once maybe twice a week during hot, dry spells – do not drown plants.
2. Fertilize with ACIDIC “Azalea and Camellia” fertilizer or Osmocote immediately after blooming stops. Do not fertilize after August 1st. Healthy, fertilized plants will not winter-kill. Don't overdo. Too little fertilizer only means slower growth. Too much fertilizer kills. Better hungry than dead.
3. NEVER CULTIVATE. Azalea roots are right below the surface.
4. Add or renew mulch.
5. WATER IN FALL AND WINTER BEFORE HARD FREEZES. This is particularly important for plants under eaves of the house that get no rain. Dry azaleas and other evergreens winter kill. Healthy azaleas will survive winters that would kill every Buford Holly in Tulsa.

Symptoms, Cause and Cures

1. Wilted leaves, -- The azalea is begging for water
2. Dropping dry leaves in Summer – Water thoroughly. Dropping leaves in Fall or Winter – May be normal; all varieties drop some leaves, some varieties drop most leaves.
3. Yellow leaves in Spring or Summer – Too much water or poor drainage. Remove plants, raise bed, replant. Yellow or Red leaves in Fall – Normal, particularly for plants in sun.
4. Yellow leaves with green veins – Too little acidity. For short-term cure, spray with iron chelate or ferrous sulfate. For long term cure, rake off mulch, sprinkle one tablespoon of sulfur around plant, water then replace mulch. If trouble persists, lift plant and correct acidity.
5. Split bark and winter-kill – You planted a florist type azalea or plant was dry or unfertilized.

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