



# hydrangea



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Photos courtesy of Bay City Flower Company

*Hydrangea macrophylla*—Hortensia group (Mophead)

## in-store and consumer care

**LIGHT** *Hydrangeas* require high light levels to do well indoors. A sunny window is the best location, but avoid direct sun, which will fade or burn the flowers.

**WATER** Do not allow *Hydrangea* plants to dry out because wilting will reduce longevity. Submerge the pots in room-temperature water until completely saturated, and then allow them to stand until all dripping has stopped. Do not allow the plants to remain in standing water, or root rot may result.

**REFRIGERATION** *Hydrangeas* can be stored in floral refrigerators at 35 F for up to four days. Storage for longer periods may affect shelf life.

**TEMPERATURE** *Hydrangeas* like cool temperatures. Move the plants to a cool area at night (50 F to 60 F) to increase their decorative life.

**HUMIDITY** Mist the leaves occasionally.

**REBLOOMING—OUTDOORS** After the plants have finished flowering, move the pots outside and plant them, pots and all, into the

## quality checklist

**BLOOMS** *Hydrangea* plants are ready for shipping or sales when at least 75 percent of the flowers are open and showing color.

**STEMS & FOLIAGE** When plants arrive in your store, check them for signs of wilt, rot or mold.

## BOTANICAL NAME

*Hydrangea macrophylla*  
(hy-DRAN-jee-a mac-ro-FY-la )

## DESCRIPTION

*Hydrangeas* are popular blooming plants grown for their small, star-shaped flowers, which are packed closely together to form rounded or pyramidal heads that are often up to 6 inches across. The showy parts of the flowers are sepals, not petals. "Hortensias," the major group of *Hydrangea macrophyllas*, have "mophead" flowerheads, with densely massed sterile florets. A smaller group, the "lacecaps," have a ring of ster-

ile florets surrounding tiny fertile flowers.

## COLORS

*Hydrangeas* are available in white, pink, blue, lilac, green and red/brown as well as bicolor varieties.

## DECORATIVE LIFE

*Hydrangea* plants will remain in bloom for several weeks, with each flower head lasting from 15 to 20 days, depending on location and care.

## AVAILABILITY

These plants can be purchased year-round in many areas. They are readily available from February through May.

ground where they will get full morning sun and light shade during the afternoon. Water the plants regularly, and fertilize them with a liquid fertilizer about every two weeks. For extra-large flower heads, allow only about three stems to develop. Remove extra shoots from the centers of the plants, and lift the pots occasionally to keep roots in the pots.

**REBLOOMING—INDOORS** Cut back the shoots after the plants have finished flowering so that two nodes, or pairs, of leaves are left on each shoot. Repot plants in a mixture of equal parts of soil and peat moss. Grow plants in south-facing windows.

## challenges

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY** *Hydrangeas* may exhibit flower-shattering when exposed to ethylene gas. Check with your supplier to make sure your plants are treated with an anti-ethylene agent at the grower or transportation level.

**PESTS** Snails, slugs and aphids are the most common pests on *Hydrangeas*. Remove any snails and slugs, and control aphids by washing the plants with an insecticidal soap.

**CAUTION** If large amounts of *Hydrangea* bark, leaves or flower buds are ingested, nausea, stomach pain, vomiting and sweating can occur. Advise customers to keep the plants out of reach of small children and pets.



*H. macrophylla*—Lacecap group

## fun facts

**WHAT'S IN A NAME** "*Hydrangea*" comes from the Greek words "*hydro*" (water) and "*aggos*" (jar). The names refer to the plant's requirement for lots of water and to its fruits, which are cup-shaped. The name "*macrophylla*" means "large-leafed."

**FAMILY** Formerly included in the *Saxifragaceae* (saxifrage) family, *Hydrangeas* have been reclassified into the *Hydrangeaceae* family. There are 17 genera, 170 species and more than 400 cultivars of *Hydrangeas*.

**HOME SWEET HOME** *Hydrangeas* are native to Japan and Korea as well as to the eastern United States as far south as Florida. They thrive in woodlands and on riverbanks.

**DESIGN NOTE** *Hydrangea* heads and florets are great for pressing, freeze-drying or air-drying. **sfr**

Some information provided by:  
Chain of Life Network®, [www.chainoflifeflora.com](http://www.chainoflifeflora.com)  
The New House Plant Expert, by Dr. D.G. Hessayon  
The Society of American Florists' (SAF)  
Flower & Plant Care manual