



dahlia



Bitsy (Water-Lily flowered)
American Dahlia Society / Claudia Biggs

BOTANICAL NAME

Dahlia

(DAL-yuh, DOLL-yuh, DOLL-ee-uh; also DALE-yuh or DAY-lee-uh, especially British)

COMMON NAME

These flowers are known commonly by their botanical name, *Dahlia*.

DESCRIPTION

Dahlias have many bloom forms, which range in diameter from about 1 inch to 10 inches or larger. The **American Dahlia Society (ADS)** categorizes these flowers into 20 groups based on size and form. (See *variety glossary on opposite page for photos of these classifications*). *Dahlia* stems are leafy, hollow and woody, and, as cut flowers, usually range from 12 to 24 inches in length.

COLORS

The ADS recognizes 15 colors or color combinations of *Dahlias* including white, yellow, orange, pink, dark pink, red, dark red, lavender, purple, bronze, flame blend, light blend, dark blend, variegated and bicolor.

VASE LIFE

Flower longevity varies widely, from four to 10 days, among cultivars and is dependent on bloom maturity at the time of sale, care from farm to florist and environmental conditions at the consumer level.

AVAILABILITY

Cut *Dahlias* are most available from about April through November from both U.S. and Holland growers, but some producers offer crops as early as February.

vase-life extenders

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION Unpack *Dahlias* immediately, and check quality. Remove all sleeves and stem bindings as well as any foliage that would be under water in storage containers. Because these flowers are usually field grown, rinse stem ends under cool running water.

STEM CUTTING Recut the stems on an angle with a sharp, sterile blade, removing at least 1 inch of stem.

HYDRATION AND NUTRITION

Immediately after cutting, dip or place stem ends into a hydration solution, then into storage containers partially filled with properly proportioned flower-food solution. Because these flowers are grown from tuberous roots, you can use bulb-flower food.

STORAGE Allow *Dahlias* to hydrate at room temperature for at least two hours before using or selling. These flowers are chill sensitive, so refrigerated storage is generally not recommended, especially long term, so use or sell these flowers quickly. If absolutely necessary, you can store *Dahlias* in a floral cooler at no lower than 40 F but for no more than two days. Extended cold storage can reduce vase life by as much as 30 percent.

ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY These botanicals' sensitivity to ethylene gas is generally considered to be low; however, make sure your purchases are treated with an ethylene inhibitor at the grower or during shipping, and take precautions to reduce ethylene levels in your facilities.

CONSUMER ACTION Advise customers to recut the stems on *Dahlias* every two to three days and replace the flower-food solution in vases as well.

purchasing tips

- Some forms of *Dahlia* blooms can be somewhat fragile, so purchase them in late-bud stage (just starting to open but showing good color). Larger blooms can be 50 percent open. If harvested too tight, these flowers will fail to open properly.
- Check buds and blooms for shattering, bruising, browning and rot.
- Inspect leaves and stems for yellowing, mold, powdery mildew, rot and collapse.

design tips

- When arranging *Dahlias*, if there is any threat of the flowers shattering, spray a petal shattering retardant (Design Master Petal Proofer) or a light aerosol adhesive on the backs of the flowers at the center.
- Spray *Dahlias* with an antitranspirant or fresh-flower sealer to reduce dehydration.
- If necessary, support the hollow stems by inserting heavy-gauge wires or plant stakes into them. This can be especially beneficial for large-flowered *Dahlias* and those arranged in floral foam.

fun facts

WHAT'S IN A NAME The genus name *Dahlia* was given in honor of Swedish botanist Dr. Anders Dahl (1751-1789). Based on the pronunciation of Dr. Dahl's surname, DOLL-yuh or DOLL-ee-uh logically would be the most appropriate pronunciation of the flower name.

FAMILY MATTERS *Dahlias* are members of the huge *Asteraceae* (*Compositae*) family. Close relatives of *Dahlias* include *Gerberas*, *Calendulas*, *Zinnias*, marigolds, marguerites, sunflowers, black-eyed Susans, China asters and dozens of other flowers.

HOME SWEET HOME These flowers are native to Mexico, Central America and Colombia.





'Pennsgift'
Informal Decorative



'Chilson's Pride'
Informal Decorative
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Hollyhill Purely Purple'
Formal Decorative
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Karma Yin Yang'
Formal Decorative
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Karma Fuchsiana'
Formal Decorative/
Water-Lily flowered
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Karma Maarten Zwaan'
Formal Decorative/
Water-Lily flowered
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Karma Ventura'
Formal Decorative/
Water-Lily flowered
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Wildwood Marie'
Water-Lily flowered



'Patty'
Water-Lily flowered
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Elvira'
Peony flowered
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Goldie Gull'
Anemone flowered
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'Crazy Legs'
Stellar



'Camano Pet'
Stellar
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'Cornel'
Ball



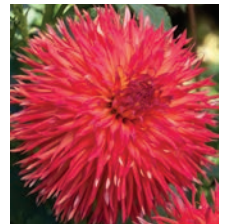
'Yellow Baby'
Pompon



'Elfin'
Pompon
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'Papa's Benji'
Laciniated



'Cheyenne'
Laciniated
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'Kathy's Choice'
Straight Cactus
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Karma Bon Bini'
Straight Cactus
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Karma Corona'
Semicactus
Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets



'Embrace'
Semicactus
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'Hollyhill Cotton Candy'
Incurved Cactus
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Dandie Sunrise'
Single
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Inflammation'
Mignon Single
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'AC Coy'
Collarette
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Honka'
Orchid flowered
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Alpen Imp'
Novelty Open
(Orchid/Collarette)
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs

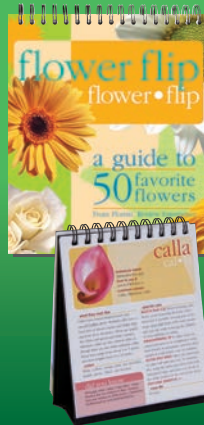


'Hollyhill Spider Woman'
Novelty Fully Double
American Dahlia Society /
Claudia Biggs



'Akita'
Novelty Fully Double **str**

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