

FORCING HARDY BULBS INDOORS

1. Select flower bulbs that are good for forcing
2. Select the proper sized pots with good drainage. Clean pots well and put your name on the bottom of both the pot and the saucer. Use a good sterile potting soil.
3. Place broken shard/leaves/newspaper in drainage hole at the bottom to prevent soil seepage when pot is watered.
4. Fill each pot $\frac{1}{2}$ the way up with potting soil. Place the bulbs (root side down) in pot. Fill the rest of the pot up with potting soil to 1" underneath the top of the pot. Tamp down the soil lightly and add a bit more soil if necessary so it remains 1" below top of flower pot (don't want water and soil to slosh over side when watered).
5. The number of bulbs per pot depends on what you are planting. Rule of thumb- 18 tulips/pot, 10 hyacinths/pot, 11 narcissus/pot, all of which go in an 8" bulb pot. Amaryllis are 1 bulb/6" pot.
6. Insert plant labels in each pot to identify the variety being forced as well as the date that you are putting it in to cool.
7. Soak pots in water up to the rim for 2 days in the sun. Be careful of the squirrels---they might like them for supper.
8. I place my soaked pots in my unheated garage, on an elevated rack (not on the floor), cover each pot with a brown bag, label. You want your bulbs to develop a mature root system so a reasonably consistent temperature is desired.
9. Check pots once a week or so to see if they need to be watered. If soil is dry to the touch, water moderately. I put water in the bottom tray—they seem to absorb water better.
10. Cool pots for 8-12 weeks depending on the variety. We recommend keeping the pots pre-chilled for the maximum time.