



# amaryllis



*Hippeastrum*  
Amaryllis, Barbados lily

## BOTANICAL NAME

*Hippeastrum* spp. (hip-ee-AS-trum)

## COMMON NAMES

Amaryllis, Barbados lily

## DESCRIPTION

Amaryllises' showy blooms are trumpet shaped and range from about 3 to 8 inches

in diameter. There are generally three to five blooms atop of each stem. Bloom types include:

- **Single flowered**, with six "petals"
  - **Double flowered**, with 12 "petals"
  - **Triple flowered**, with 18 "petals"
  - **Miniature (*Hippeastrum gracilis*)**, with smaller blooms and shorter stems; can be single flowered or double flowered
  - **Trumpet**, with smaller but more elongated trumpet-shaped blooms
  - **Cybister (*Hippeastrum cybister*)**, with narrow to extremely thin "petals," creating a lilylike or a spiderlike appearance
  - **Butterfly / Orchid (*Hippeastrum papilio*)**, with varying sizes of petals, creating a butterflylike or an orchidlike appearance
- Amaryllis stems are hollow, leafless, light

green and typically range from 16 to 30 inches in length.

## COLORS

These bulb flowers are available in both solid colors and bicolors (usually striped or mottled), in a palette that comprises reds, ranging from pink to burgundy; red-orange, orange, salmon, coral and apricot; yellow, yellow-green and green; and white.

## VASE LIFE

Amaryllises can last from eight to 14 days, depending on variety and care, with individual blooms lasting from two to five days each.

## AVAILABILITY

Today, because of new varieties and global markets, cut amaryllises are available almost year-round; however, peak commercial production occurs from around October through March or April. Check with your favorite supplier(s) for availability.

## vase-life extenders

**PROMPT ATTENTION** Immediately remove amaryllises from the shipping boxes, and check flower quality.

**STEM CUTTING** Recut the stems, on an angle, with a sharp knife, removing at least 1 inch of stem. Stem ends are prone to splitting and curling; however, some research suggests this can be reduced by placing the stems into a sugar solution made with 2 tablespoons of sugar per quart of water for 24 hours prior to sale or use. You can also wrap the bases of the stems with waterproof tape to prevent the problems.

**HYDRATION AND NUTRITION** Immediately after cutting, dip or place the stem ends into a hydration solution, then place them into containers with 4 to 6 inches of properly proportioned cool (45 F to 60 F) *bulb-flower-food* solution.

**REFRIGERATION** Amaryllises are tropical bulb flowers (see "Fun Facts: Home Sweet Home" on Page 18), so they prefer refrigeration at temperatures between 41 F and 50 F. Allow them to hydrate in the

cooler for at least two hours before using or selling them. If open blooms are needed quickly, or if refrigeration between 41 F and 50 F is not possible, store these flowers out of the cooler, at room temperature.

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY** Amaryllises are extremely sensitive to ethylene gas, so make sure the flowers you purchase are treated with an ethylene inhibitor at the grower level or during transportation. Buy only from a grower or supplier whose veracity you can trust.

**CARE MYTH** Some florists claim to improve the lasting quality of amaryllises by searing stem ends with a flame or dipping them into boiling water for several seconds. Avoid these actions; there is no scientific data that substantiate these claims, and they can damage the flower stems.

**CONSUMER ACTION** Instruct customers to recut the stems and to change the vase solution every other day using the *bulb-flower nutrient* you provide. Also advise them to cut off blooms as they fade, to

carefully remove pollen-bearing anthers as soon as blooms open, and to keep the flowers out of direct sunlight and warm and cold drafts.

## design tips

Some florists argue that amaryllises are most successfully used only in vase arrangements—without floral foam. However, if you wish to arrange amaryllises into floral foam, follow these steps.

- Always place amaryllises into designs before any other flowers or foliage.
- Wrap the bases of the stems with waterproof tape to prevent splitting.
- Invert the flowers, and fill the hollow stems with *bulb-flower-food* solution.
- Insert two plant stakes so they extend beyond the stem ends.
- Plug the stem ends with cotton.
- Turn the flowers upright, and insert the stakes into the floral foam, bringing stem ends into contact with the wet floral foam and gently pressing them slightly into the foam.

## fun facts

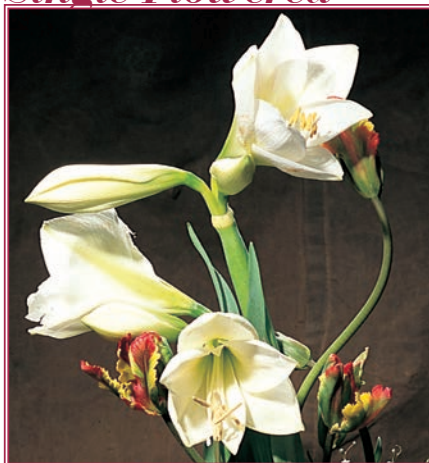
**WHAT'S IN A NAME** *Hippeastrum* is said to derive from the Greek words "hippos," for horse, and "astron," for star, because the blooms once were considered to resemble a horse's head, at a certain stage in their opening, and because of the star-shaped form of the open flowers.

"Amaryllis" was the name of a lovelorn shepherdess in Greek mythology who pierced her own heart to produce a new flower from her blood, to attract the attention of a flower- and plant-loving shepherd she desired.

**FAMILY MATTERS** The genus *Hippeastrum* is a member of the *Amaryllidaceae* family. Close relatives include *Nerine* (spider lily, Guernsey lily), *Clivia* (kaffir lily), *Eucharis* (Eucharist lily) and *Narcissus* (daffodil/jonquil/paper-white).

**HOME SWEET HOME** Amaryllises are native to the Caribbean region and to tropical and subtropical South America (Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina).

## Single Flowered



'Mont Blanc'

## purchasing tip

Look for stems with puffy, undamaged buds that are just showing color. One or two buds can be just starting to open. Watch for mold, rot or brown spots on the blossoms or stems.

## toxicity alert

All parts of these bulb flowers can cause minor illness, if ingested, so keep them out of the reach of children and pets.



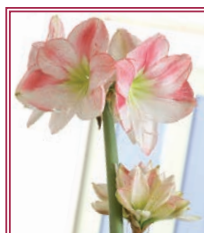
'Christmas Gift'



'Lemon Lime'



'Ludwig Dazzler'



'Apple Blossom'



'Rilona'



'Faro'



'Ambiance'



'Toronto'



'San Remo'



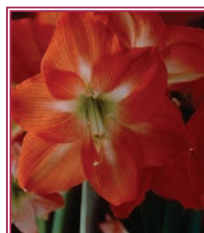
'Vera'



'Hercules'



'Desire'



'Charmeur'



'Charisma'

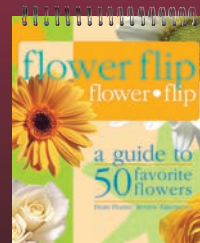


'Minerva'



'Orange Sovereign'

Do you need a quick and easy reference for information about other cut flowers?



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# cut flower of the month

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## Single Flowered



'Pygmee'



'Bolero'



'Ferrari'



'Red Lion'



'Royal Velvet'



'Liberty'

## Double Flowered



'White Peacock'



'Nymph'



'Blossom Peacock'



'Double Picotee'



'Dancing Queen'



'Double Record'

## Miniature (*H. gracilis*)



'Lady Jane'



'Andes'



'Green Goddess' / 'Bianca'



'Amorette' / 'Amoretta'



'Giraffe'



'Baby Star'

## Trumpet



'Pamela'



'Scarlet Baby'



'Amputo'



'Pink Floyd'

## Butterfly/Orchid (*H. papilio*)



Butterfly amaryllis **sfr**

## Cybister (*H. cybister*)



'Emerald'



'Lima'

## *H. papilio x H. cybister*



'La Paz'



'Jungle Star'