

Best for Iowa

Suggested clematis species for Iowa include (flowering occurs on the wood type as indicated):

- *Clematis alpina*—blue flowers (old)
- *Clematis integrifolia*—indigo blue flowers (new)
- *Clematis macropetala*—lavender blue flowers (old)
- *Clematis orientalis*—yellow flowers (new)
- *Clematis recta*—white flowers (new)
- *Clematis terniflora*—white flowers (new)
- *Clematis texensis*—scarlet flowers (new)
- *Clematis viticella*—purple flowers (new)



Suggested varieties according to color include (flowering occurs on the wood type as indicated):

Purple—‘Gypsy Queen’ (new), *jackmanii* ‘Superba’ (new), ‘The President’ (old, new)

Blue—‘Mrs. Cholmondeley’ (old, new), ‘Ramona’ (old, new), ‘Lord Nevill’ (old, new), ‘Ascotiensis’ (new), ‘Betty Corning’ (new)

Red—‘Madame Edouard André’ (new) ‘Lincoln Star’ (old, new), ‘Ernest Markham’ (new), ‘Niobe’ (new), ‘Ville de Lyon’ (new), ‘Rouge Cardinal’ (old, new)

White—*jackmanii* ‘Alba’ (new), ‘Henryi’ (old, new), ‘Marie Boisselot’ (old, new)

Pink—‘Comtesse de Bouchaud’ (new), ‘Hagley Hybrid’ (new), ‘Bees Jubilee’ (old, new), ‘Duchess of Albany’ (new)

Bicolor—‘King Edward VII’ (old, new) ‘Nelly Moser’ (old), ‘Star of India’ (new)

Sources

Busse Gardens (plants)
17160 - 245th Ave. NW,
Big Lake, MN 55309
<http://www.bussegardens.com> (\$3 for catalog)



Greer Gardens
1280 Goodpasture Island Road
Eugene, OR 97401
<http://www.greergardens.com>

Park Seed
1 Parkton Ave., Greenwood, SC 29647
<http://www.parkseed.com>

Thompson and Morgan Inc. (seed)
P.O. Box 1308, Jackson, NJ 08527-0308
<http://www.thompson-morgan.com>

Wayside Gardens (plants)
1 Garden Lane, Hodges, SC 29695-0001
<http://www.waysidegardens.com>

For more information

For more information on selection, planting, cultural practices, and environmental quality, contact your Iowa State University Extension county office, or visit one of these ISU Web sites:

ISU Extension publications—
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pubs>

ISU Horticulture—
<http://www.yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu>

Reiman Gardens—
<http://www.reimangardens.iastate.edu>

File: Horticulture 2-1

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Stanley R. Johnson, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.

... and justice for all

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Clematis



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University Extension

Clematis are often referred to as the queen of the flowering vines. Plants in this versatile genus produce single or double flowers from May to October in a variety of colors. Sepals—not petals—make up the colorful portion of the flower. These may be thin, wide, pointed, rounded, crinkled, twisted, or even crimped. They may be marked with center bars, stripes, or vivid shadings. The flower form varies from nodding, pitcher-shaped, bell-shaped, or star-shaped, to the familiar large, flat, erectly held blossoms. Flowers may have contrasting colored stamens or no stamens at all. Small flowered varieties offer a range of fragrances lacking in the large flowered varieties.



Some species can grow 8 to 12 feet in a single season, others reach a height of only 2 to 4 feet. More than 250 species and at least 5,000 cultivars exist in the world. Not all of these are hardy in Iowa, but we can select from numerous hardy species and cultivars.

Types of Clematis

Vining clematis can be divided into three groups.

Group 1: Blooms on the previous season's growth (old wood)

Examples: *Clematis alpina* and *Clematis macropetala*

The earliest clematis bloom between April and June. Flowers develop from buds located on the previous season's growth.

This group is the most difficult to grow in Iowa as the vines may need to be protected over winter to insure their survival. To provide adequate protection, the vines and their support may need to be taken down in the fall, laid on the ground, and then covered with several inches of mulch. If not protected, vines may suffer extensive dieback and produce few, if any, flowers. Wait until bud break before pruning Group 1 clematis. Prune back to live wood.

Group 2: Flowers on both old and new growth

Examples: 'The President', 'Henryi', and 'Ramona'

The second group of clematis blooms twice. Large flowers are produced from May to July on the previous season's growth. In late summer, plants will bloom on the current year's growth.

In early spring, prune out the dead wood. Spring blooms will be sparse if plants suffer extensive winter dieback. Plants will bloom more heavily in late summer.

Group 3: Flowers on new growth

Examples: *Clematis viticella*, *Clematis terniflora* (*paniculata*), and large flowered hybrids such as *Clematis* × *jackmanii*, 'Ernest Markham', and 'Hagley Hybrid'

The third group of clematis flowers on the current year's growth (new wood). Vines produce one main flush of bloom (sometime from late May to September). Because they bloom on current year's growth, Group 3 clematis are the most reliable performers in Iowa.

Pruning is relatively easy. Vines can be cut back to within 6 to 12 inches of the ground in late winter/early spring. An alternative method is to wait until bud break in spring and prune back to the uppermost new growth.

Growing tips

Clematis thrive in rich, well drained soils with at least 6 hours of sunlight each day and 1 inch of water per week.

When planting, dig a generous-sized hole and fill with a mixture of soil and compost or moistened peat. Do not add lime unless your soil is highly acidic. Clematis prefer soils with slightly acidic to neutral pH levels. Plant the crown 1 to 2 inches below the soil surface. Water well and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of organic material such as wood chips or compost.



A mulch provides winter protection for the crown and keeps the root system cool during summer heat.

After planting, trim to 12 inches or to a pair of low buds to encourage multiple branching and additional shoots. Fertilize established plants with a balanced all-purpose garden fertilizer (such as 10-10-10) in spring.

Support

Clematis climb by twisting their petioles or leaf stalks around a support. They can be grown on trellises, fences, lampposts, deck rails, and other structures. Clematis also can be allowed to climb over shrubs, small trees, tree stumps, and rock piles. When planting near a non-living support, allow at least a foot between the support and the plant. Near shrubs, trees, and other living supports, locate plants at least 2 feet away from the support. New growth will wind through the support towards the light. Clematis do not possess tendrils or aerial rootlets; you may need to help young plants start to vine where you want them.

Pests

Clematis don't have serious insect pests. However, clematis wilt is an occasional problem. Affected vines wilt suddenly and then die. Dead vines should be cut at ground level, removed, and destroyed. Clematis wilt rarely kills the entire plant. Affected plants usually send up new shoots.

Clematis in vases

Clematis are excellent fresh cut flowers and can last four days or longer. Look for flowers that have just opened or are only three-fourths open on thick, strong stems. Three choices include 'Beauty of Worcester', 'The President', and 'Nelly Moser'. Many clematis also form attractive seed heads.

