



Papaver Somniferum

Annual poppies can be challenging to grow depending on climate. Instructions based on growing zone are provided below. To determine the applicable zone, search for your zip code along with "growing zone."

Important Climate Considerations

Not all zones are created equal. The information below is a general guide. Some areas in zones 5-7 (parts of the Midwest, Northeast, and western desert regions) experience very hot summers, while parts of Oregon, Washington, and California—particularly along the Pacific coast—in zones 8-10 have very cool weather where poppies can be grown nearly year-round.

The most important factor is temperature. Poppies prefer cool but not cold conditions, though they can tolerate light frost.

Planting Times by Zone

- Zones 3-7: Sow in spring after all danger of frost has passed. Summer sowing is also possible, though the growing season will be shorter. Poppies thrive in cool weather and will continue to flourish and bloom even through light frosts.
- Zone 8: Plant in spring or fall.
- Zone 9A: Plant between October and March.
- Zone 9B and above: These can be grown successfully, but must be planted in November or December—January at the latest. Later planting will result in germination followed by decline as temperatures rise in March and April. In Zone 10A, November is the optimal planting month.

Temperature Requirements

Optimal germination occurs between 46-80°F. Optimal growing temperatures are 50-77°F, though cooler temperatures are tolerated with slower growth. Temperatures significantly above this range may prevent germination or cause poor performance. Poppies require at least 90 days from sprout to flower.

Cold Stratification

Poppies require 30 days of dry-cold stratification. Seeds shipped by Seedcult are pre-stratified and ready to plant unless the packet indicates otherwise. If waiting for optimal temperatures, continue storing seeds in cold storage.

Fertilizer

Poppies prefer not to be fertilized. They are accustomed to growing in poor soils with low nutrients and will obtain what they need from potting or garden soil.



Spacing and Transplanting

Poppies have a very high germination rate when conditions are correct. Plant assuming all seeds will sprout, as thinning typically results in plant loss—poppies do not tolerate root disturbance. Pulling adjacent plants can result in losing all of them.

Recommended spacing is 6 inches, though 8-12 inches allows plants to reach their full potential in flower size. Plant seeds where they will remain permanently. Poppies do not transplant well. Standard starter pots are discouraged, as transplanting will likely fail. Biodegradable peat pots can be used, allowing the entire pot to be transferred into the ground without disturbing roots.

Pot Planting

Poppies prefer in-ground growing but can be grown successfully in pots. Use a deep pot, as poppy roots grow deep. Fill with potting soil and wet the soil before planting so seeds are not displaced. Press seeds lightly into the soil to a depth of approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ inch. Water lightly with a hose on mist setting or a hand pump sprayer. Water daily, keeping soil moist but not wet. Place in full sun. Seeds typically sprout within 1-2 weeks. Seedlings will eventually resemble lettuce.

In-Ground Planting

Choose a site that receives full sun. Clear the area of weeds and prepare the bed with a layer of garden soil. Wet the soil before planting. Press seeds into the soil. Water daily, slightly more than with pot planting. Keep moist but not wet. Do not fertilize.

Poppies thrive in cool weather and will persist until the first hard freeze. After seed pods dry on the plant, seeds can be collected and stored in the refrigerator for planting the following spring. However, poppies tend to reseed easily and often return on their own. In most cooler climates, planting is only necessary once—allow pods to dry on the plant and drop naturally. Seeds can survive freezing temperatures and typically return each spring.

Seed Storage Guidelines

For delayed planting, proper storage ensures seed viability. Seeds require cool, dark, and dry conditions. Retain seeds in the food-grade plastic bag provided, place the bag inside a sealed glass jar, and cover with an opaque bag or material to block light. Ideal storage locations include basements or refrigerators. Refrigeration is essential for certain species, including poppies. Under proper conditions, most seeds remain viable for 1-5 years, depending on species.

Satisfaction Guarantee

Seedcult guarantees all seeds, bulbs, and bare root plants to provide satisfactory yields. Customers who experience germination issues or are dissatisfied for any reason are encouraged to contact Seedcult prior to leaving a review. Replacement, refund, or expert guidance will be provided. Customer satisfaction and plant success are core priorities.

Seedcult is a Florida-based specialty seed company operating exclusively through online sales and direct shipping. Our catalog encompasses a comprehensive range of seed varieties, with particular expertise in rare cultivars and exotic hybrids.

Seedcult maintains an unwavering commitment to non-GMO seeds. This principle was established at our founding and remains embedded in the DNA of our company charter. It is a commitment from which we will never deviate.