

PROPAGATION

BY ROOT CUTTINGS

HUMBER NURSERIES 'GREEN THUMB GUIDE'



A somewhat overlooked form of propagation is from root cuttings. Many fruits such as raspberries and blackberries can be easily increased by this method.

Root cuttings seldom start to grow quickly, so you must be patient as you await the first sprouts. Careful handling in making and placing the cuttings, as well as good after-care, will help ensure success.

Early spring is the best time to take root cuttings. Although a few small pieces can be chopped from the roots of a plant in the ground without disturbing it greatly, the usual method is to dig up the entire plant, cut the roots into pieces, and either replant the remainder of the old plant or throw it away. If it is replanted to grow more roots, the top must be cut back severely so that there will not be more top than roots.

The part of the root that is closest to the main root of the plant is considered the top of the root cutting. This is important to remember because some plants must be planted vertically and right-side up. Propagators often make their cuttings with a straight cut across the top and a slanted one on the bottom so they can make a speedy identification when planting them out.

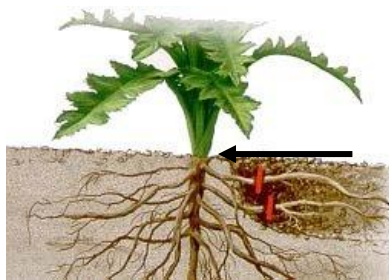
Root cuttings do best if they are planted in light loamy soil that is rich in organic matter and nutrients. They are usually started in the ground, but if you want only a few, they may be planted in pots or deep flats. Give them plenty of sun and water them whenever necessary so that the shallow roots do not dry out.

There are two primary methods of starting root cuttings:

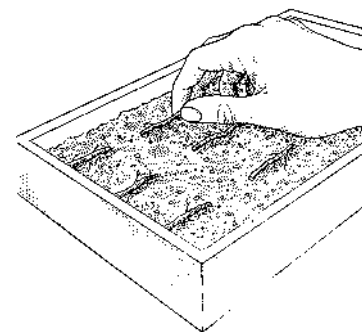
- (1) Perennials with fine roots can be started easily in large numbers by cutting the roots into pieces 2 – 5 cm long, and scattering them over the surface of well-prepared, rich, sandy soil. Cover them with a half-inch of sifted soil or sand and keep it moist. Achillea, Crown Vetch, Sea Holly, Flowering Spurge, Gaillardia, Soapwort, Phlox, Perennial Salvia, Stokes Aster and Verbascum are only a few of the plants that root and form tops easily by this method.
- (2) Plants with fleshy roots, such as Acanthus, Bleeding Heart, Peony, Baby's Breath, Bee Balm, Rhubarb and Oriental Poppy prefer a different treatment. Make the cutting slightly longer, from 4 – 7 cm. (make Peonies 8 cm long). Plant them vertically, top side up, about 8 cm apart, with the top end of the cutting protruding about 1 cm above the soil.



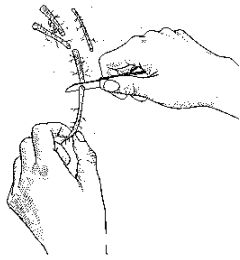
When taking root cuttings, dig up plant and cut off roots, making slant cut on bottom of root.



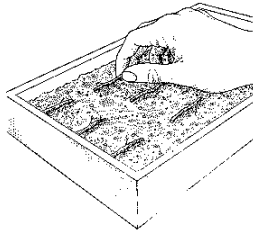
If plant is to be replanted after cuttings are taken, the top should be pruned to reduce load on roots.



Depending on the type of plant, roots can be started in flats or a variety of other containers.



Cut roots of fine rooted plants into 3 cm pieces.



Scatter them on soil, and cover with light layer.



Plant fleshy roots, 4 – 7 cm tall, top side up, and with about 1 cm protruding from the soil. Bury the top of the root 3 – 5 cm when planting the roots of woody trees and shrubs.

PERENNIALS FROM ROOT CUTTINGS

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Acanthus</i>	Bear's Breeches	<i>Gaillardia</i>	Blanket Flower
<i>Achillea</i>	Yarrow	<i>Geranium</i>	Geranium - Storksbill
<i>Alyssum</i>	Basket of Gold	<i>Gypsophila</i>	Baby's Breath
<i>Anchusa</i>	Alkanet	<i>Limonium</i>	Statice
<i>Anemone</i>	Anemone	<i>Macleaya</i>	Plume Poppy
<i>Asclepias</i>	Butterfly Weed	<i>Mertensia</i>	Virginia Bluebells
<i>Brunnera</i>	Brunnera	<i>Monarda</i>	Bee Balm
<i>Catananache</i>	Cupid's Dart	<i>Paeonia</i>	Peony
<i>Centaurea</i>	Globe Thistle	<i>Papaver o.</i>	Oriental Poppy
<i>Cerastium</i>	Snow-in-summer	<i>Peltiphyllum</i>	Peltiphyllum
<i>Ceratostigma</i>	Leadwort	<i>Phlox paniculata</i>	Summer Phlox
<i>Chrysanthemum</i>	Chrysanthemum	<i>Physostegia</i>	Obedient Plant
<i>Cirsium</i>	Thistle, Japanese	<i>Platycodon</i>	Balloon Flower
<i>Crambe</i>	Crambe	<i>Pulmonaria</i>	Lungwort
<i>Cynara</i>	Cardoon	<i>Pyrethrum</i>	Painted Daisy
<i>Dicentra</i>	Bleeding Heart	<i>Rheum</i>	Rhubarb
<i>Echinacea</i>	Purple Cone Flower	<i>Rudbeckia</i>	Black Eyed Susan
<i>Echinops</i>	Globe Thistle	<i>Salvia</i>	Sage
<i>Eryngium</i>	Sea Holly	<i>Saponaria</i>	Soapwort
<i>Euphorbia</i>	Spurge	<i>Stokesia</i>	Stoke's Aster
<i>Filipendula</i>	Queen of the Prairie/Meadow	<i>Verbascum</i>	Mullein
		<i>Yucca</i>	Yucca

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