

PROPAGATION

BY DIVIDING, LAYERING AND CUTTINGS

HUMBER NURSERIES 'GREEN THUMB GUIDE'



A species, by definition, will always 'come true' from seed. That means the offspring will resemble the parent in every respect. However, most plant hybrids and cultivars do not come true from seed. In many cases, plants are sterile and produce no viable seed, so other techniques must be used to increase our supply of plants.

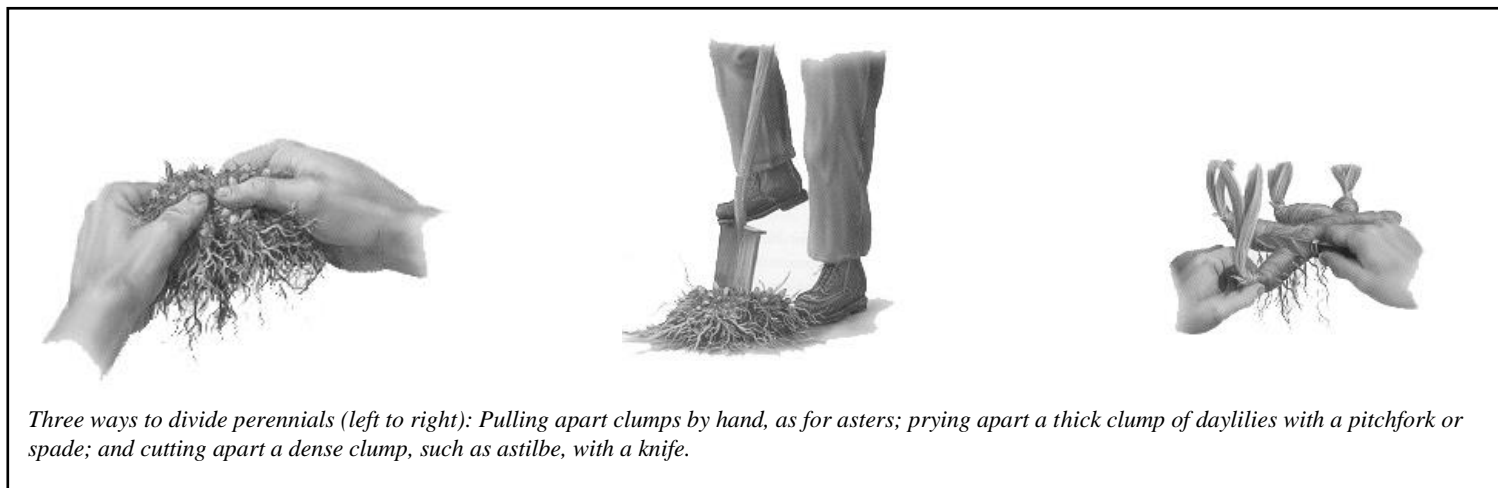
DIVISION

A very simple method of obtaining new plants is by digging them up and separating them into many smaller divisions. Many herbaceous perennials are produced by this method. Most perennials can best be divided in spring as soon as they are showing a few inches of new growth. Those that flower in April and May should be divided after bloom.

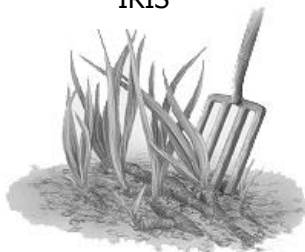
Hosta, Daylily, Iris and Peony are usually divided in early fall so that they can have time to put out new fibrous roots before the onset of winter. This work is best done in cool, cloudy or rainy weather, not in blistering heat that would dry the roots. Keep a pail of water handy and soak any divisions that have lost their soil.

PERENNIALS THAT NEED DIVIDING

Some perennials need to be divided every two or three years to keep them at their best. These include: *Achillea*, *Anthemis*, *Artemisia lactiflora*, *Aster*, *Boltonia*, *Cerastium*, *Chrysanthemum*, *Eupatorium*, *Helenium*, *Helianthus*, *Lysimachia*, *Physostegia*, *Primula*, *Rudbeckia* and *Solidago*.



IRIS



Each segment of the Iris rhizome with a fan of leaves can be separated to form a new plant.

A STANDARD DIVISION

Has 3 to 5 'eyes' for next year's growth. At least 3 good roots 1 – 3 cm diameter, no longer than 10 – 15 cm with slanting ends. Cut tip ends facing away from each other, outward and downward. If 2 roots cross each other, one should be eliminated.

PEONY



A SMALL DIVISION

Has 1 or 2 'eyes' and at least 1 good root. Requires 1 or 2 yrs. longer to develop and very good care first year.

Peonies do not need division and can be left for generations. To increase your stock, divide as shown.

SOFTWOOD CUTTINGS

Tip cuttings from soft new growth will readily form roots in a moist medium such as Pro-Mix. Some lower leaves may need to be removed to provide enough stem to go into the soil. A rooting powder (Stim-Root) on the cut helps to promote rooting.

Many of your favourite houseplants can be reproduced this way. Tender perennials that are usually used like annuals – *Impatiens*, *Geranium*, *Fuchsia* and hardy perennials such as *Achillea*, *Aster*, *Campanula*, *Geranium*, *Helenium*, *Lupin*, *Monarda*, *Potentilla* and *Sedum*.

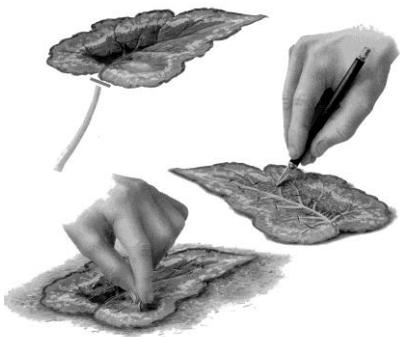
HARDWOOD CUTTINGS

Length of cuttings can be 10 to 30 cm. Take in the fall or early winter. Thin, soft tips can be cut off at a bud as they are likely to die back. Bundle your cuttings and bury them in moist Pro-Mix until spring. Plant directly in the soil or start indoors in small pots. Stim-Root #3, a rooting hormone, is recommended.



LEAF CUTTINGS

A popular method of propagation for many tropical plants.

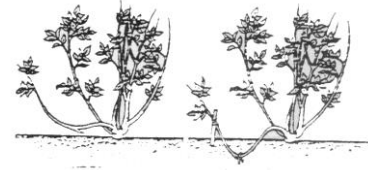


African Violets grow readily from leaf cuttings.

Leaf cuttings. *Begonia rex* can be propagated by pegging its leaves onto sandy compost. It is usually necessary to cut the mid-rib and the main veins of the leaf to induce rooting. A new plant may be produced at each split.

SOIL LAYERING

Layering is one of the most certain methods of reproducing many shrubs. Note that the layer is partly severed before being placed in the soil and is then staked to prevent movement.



Serpentine layering, often used on Clematis, is carried out in late spring or early summer. Pliable young stems are laid along the ground and small nicks are made in the underside of the stem by each node. These are then buried, leaving the connecting portions of stem above ground in a series of loops. By autumn each buried section should have rooted and formed new plants which can be dug up and separated.

AIR LAYERING

Strong growing plants with woody stems can be reproduced through air layering. It is done either in spring on the mature wood of the previous season or in late summer on the hardened shoots of the current season's growth.

You will need a sharp knife, wooden match, rooting hormone, soft paint brush, moist sphagnum moss, piece of plastic and two twist ties.

Layer the tops or tips of plants or branches. Select a section no longer than 25 to 40 cm. Find a spot just below a leaf node and cut almost halfway through the stem. Insert the wooden match at least halfway into the cut to keep it open. With a soft brush, dust as much of the cut area as possible with rooting hormone.

Surround the open cut with moist sphagnum moss. Use liberally around the entire stem about 5 cm above and below the cut. Wrap the moss with plastic and tie the plastic fairly tightly with a twist tie first at the bottom then at the top.

Check the plastic covering weekly to be sure the moss is moist. If it shows signs of drying, mist thoroughly and replace the plastic cover.

When roots are visible, remove the plastic and peat moss, taking care to avoid root damage. Cut the rooted shoot away from the parent plant, just above the rooted area. Plant in pot, cold frame or directly into the garden.

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