



Location, Location, Location

All Hydrangeas bloom well in morning sun and afternoon shade in the Mobile area. They do not do well in heavy shade.

- PeeGee's (*H. paniculata*) need about 5 hours of sun to bloom well, and can take full sun if kept watered.
- Give hydrangeas enough room to grow to their full size without pruning
- Plant them away from hardwood trees that will compete for water and nutrients. They thrive better under deep rooted trees, like pines.
- Well-drained, humus-enriched moist soil - a mulch of pine bark, pine needles, or peat moss will help with moisture retention.
- Give them plenty of moisture – but not wet feet!

Pink or Blue Blooms on Bigleaf Hydrangeas

(*H. macrophylla*)

White hydrangeas will stay white!

The presence of aluminum determines the color, and uptake of aluminum is affected by soil pH.

- Acid soils pH 5.5 and lower produce blue flowers
- More neutral pH 6.5 -7 can result in purple flowers
- Alkaline soils pH 6.5 and higher gives pink flowers
- Add aluminum sulfate (diluted and sparingly) to help turn pink to blue.

Pruning Bigleaf Hydrangeas (*H. macrophylla*)

These bloom on OLD wood - the stems that have been there since the summer before. They require little pruning, except for spent blooms, and any dead, damaged, or unsightly wood

- Cut back old flowers to the next bud down on the stem right after blooming. This leaves the buds that will bloom next year
- For established, older plants (5 + years) remove about 1/3rd of the oldest stems at the base each year. This lets in more air and light and encourages growth of healthy new branches.
- If you need to prune to reduce the size, it is best done in June or July – but it will certainly grow back quickly - so plant with the room to grow so it doesn't have to be pruned back in size.
- If the variety is a rebloomer, or 'remontant' like Penny Mac that flowers on new wood as well as old wood, you want to prune a little every year just to keep the new wood growing.

Pruning Oakleaf Hydrangeas (*H. quercifolia*)

These generally bloom on old wood, and you can get away with no pruning. To keep them well-shaped, cut dead stems back at the base in late winter or early spring.

Pruning PeeGee Hydrangeas (*H. paniculata*)

These bloom on new wood, the stems that grow in the same year as blooming. They do NOT have to be pruned every year.

But cutting them back in late winter will keep the plants from becoming overgrown, and will encourage more new growth, more flowers, and larger blooms.