

## AMARYLLIS AT HOME

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Amaryllis (*Hoppeastrum* spp.) bulbs are now being sold by many garden shops and plant suppliers either in a container (pot) ready to grow after watering or as a bulb. Ready to grow containers are sold with plastic pots, artificial media (peat moss-vermiculite) and bulb. The bulb is then to be planted in the pot with the media and watered by the homeowner until flowers bloom.



AMARYLLIS, GIANT HYBRID

If purchased as a bulb, it is planted in a pot large enough to accommodate the bulb using a mixture of 1/3 soil, 1/3 peat and 1/3 sand or perlite. When potting, leave the upper half of the bulb exposed above the soil line. After potting, the bulb should be watered and placed in an area where the temperature is about 60°F. It usually takes six weeks for the bulb to flower.

First to appear from the bulb will be the flower spike with one to three blooms. At blooming time the foliage will appear. The foliage should be kept alive during the growing season and throughout the summer. During this time the bulb is making food for next season's blooms, thus the leaves should be kept growing as long as possible. When the leaves turn yellow and become brown, rest the plant by withholding water.

The bulbs will normally remain dormant until November when they may be watered and new growth will start as above. Sometimes they will not flower again but, occasionally, some have lived and flowered for years.

Feed with a soluble fertilizer according to label directions while leaves are active.

Pests are infrequent. If mealy bugs, thrips or aphids appear, contact your garden center operator or Extension office for information on control.

Amaryllis hybrid bulbs range in color from white to orange, pink, red, salmon and scarlet.

This plant is a challenge to any grower and offers something different for the home.

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This article was prepared as a Plant Life Series publications and will soon be available as an Extension publication.