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# Paperwhite Narcissus

**Paperwhites** require little more than to be potted and watered to produce clusters of fragrant blooms. When the bulbs arrive, open the bags immediately to allow air to reach the bulbs. You can either pot the bulbs right away or store them at room temperature in a dark place for up to 4-6 weeks. Consider potting 6-12 bulbs at 2- to 4-week intervals for a staggered display. Bulbs generally bloom 4-6 weeks after potting.

**Paperwhite Narcissus** will grow happily and bloom with nothing more than water and stones or beach glass. To "plant" your bulbs in soilless containers, begin by carefully placing a layer of stones or glass to a depth of about 2 inches in a small vase or about 4 inches in a larger vase. Next place a layer of paperwhite bulbs close to each other, pointy end up. Put a few stones or pieces of beach glass around and between the bulbs to anchor them in the vase. Leave the tops of the bulbs exposed. Finally, add water until the level reaches just below the base of the bulbs, but no higher (if the bases of the bulbs sit in water, they will rot). Follow the instructions for "Rooting and care" below.

To pot the bulbs, begin by placing the potting mix in a plastic tub. Slowly add water and stir until the mix is moist but not soggy. Add moistened mix to the accompanying container until it is about 3/4 full. Set the bulbs, pointed end up, on top of the mix. Space the bulbs very closely; they should almost touch. Then add more mix, covering the bulbs up to their necks and leaving the tips exposed. Water thoroughly. Follow the instructions for "Rooting and care" below.

**Rooting and care:** Set your container or vase in a cool (50-60°F is ideal) place away from direct sunlight. Check the bulbs frequently and water thoroughly when the potting mix is dry 1 inch below the surface (but not more than once a week until the bulbs begin active growth), or when the water level is more than an inch below the stones or glass in your vase. If your bulbs are in a bowl (a pot without a drainage hole), water with extra care: Bulbs sitting in soggy potting mix soon rot. Once a week, tug gently on the bulbs to see if they have begun to produce roots. When your tug meets with firm resistance (usually about 3 weeks after potting), move the container to a sunny window. Keep a close eye on watering. Bulbs in active growth can dry out in just a day or two.

When Paperwhites are forced to bloom indoors, they have a tendency to topple when in flower. Hold them upright with the bulb supports supplied with our bulb kits or with bamboo stakes and twine (available at garden centers). If you use our supports, set them in place when the bulb shoots are 8-10 inches tall by inserting the legs at regular intervals along the inside edge of the container. As the leaves and stems grow, a few will find their way outside the ring. Gently bend them and push them back inside.

After Paperwhites finish blooming, we recommend that you throw the bulbs out or toss them on the compost pile. They won't bloom again indoors.

If you don't want to start your Paperwhites right away or you want to hold some in reserve for a staggered display, store them in a cool (60-70°F), dark place. Open the bags or boxes to allow air to circulate around the bulbs.