



Clematis : A Lovely Vine to Bloom and Twine

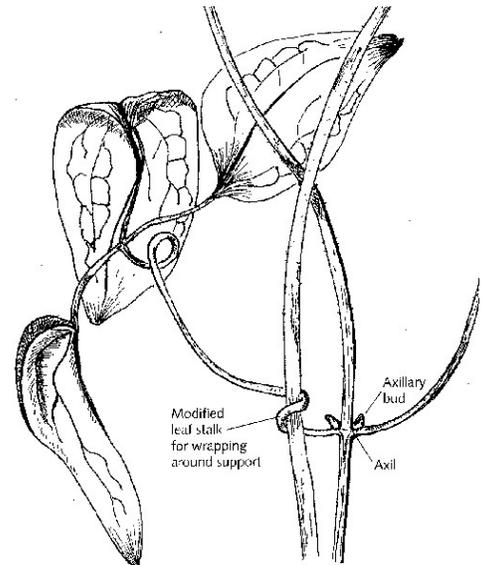
Well-behaved in a small garden and floriferous enough to be featured in a larger landscape without getting lost, clematis deserves its nickname, “Queen of the Vines.” There are around 200 species native around the world and over 1000 cultivars, offering a variety of flower shape and color, vine height, and time of flowering. With proper site selection and soil preparation, they are long-lived, easy going perennials that deserve a spot in any garden.

site selection and planting

- Clematis vines flower best with at least six hours of sun but appreciate afternoon shade in the heat and humidity of St. Louis summers. The east or northeast side of the house with full morning sun is ideal.
- They need rich, medium moist, well-drained soils and will need supplemental watering during dry spells.
- While their flowers and foliage love the sun, their roots should be kept cool. Either plant shallow-rooted small shrubs, low perennials or groundcovers to shade the root zone or else mulch thickly.
- Dig the bed deeply and amend with Turface and compost to improve drainage.
- Cut off the nursery support or trellis rather than trying to untangle the plant. Prune out any bent/broken stems.
- Plant the clematis crown (top of the rootball) at least 2½” below the soil level. This will ensure vigorous new stem growth as well as allowing the roots to develop and spread.

first pruning

- Pruning begins for newly planted clematis in the 2nd or 3rd season. In early March, cut or pinch back each stem to strong new leaf-axil buds at around 12-18” from the ground. New side shoots will appear.
- Two to three weeks later, pinch terminal buds of stems that have developed from these side shoots. Continue this practice every two weeks, spreading the branches out until the vine has filled the trellis.
- In later years, merely thin out old and dead branches each spring
- For more uniform bloom coverage, discern which group your clematis falls into and adjust your pruning with these slight differences:



excerpt from drawing by E. Leeds

pruning by groups

- Group 1 – flowers only on old wood
 - pruning may not be necessary, but it is best to prune after flowering
 - the new growth that appears after pruning will produce next year’s flowers
- Group 2 – flowers on old AND new wood
 - only light pruning is needed in order to leave some mature stems from the previous season
 - in early spring, prune down to *highest* strong pair of leaf-axil buds, staggering stem heights from about 10” up
 - spread out new growth over the trellis, training it to fill
- Group 3 – flowers only on new wood
 - in early spring prune *all* stems down to around 8” from the ground, spreading out new growth over the trellis
 - this technique is the same as for newly planted clematis



A Few Choices

<i>Clematis</i> 'Saphyra Indigo'	1.5-2' x 2-3'	Group 3	Late, small-flowering, shrub
<i>Clematis</i> 'Bernardine'	3-4' x 1-2'	Group 3	Early, large-flowering
<i>Clematis</i> 'Corinne'	4-5' x 2-3'	Group 2	Early, large-flowering
<i>Clematis</i> 'Giselle'	4-5' x 2-3'	Group 3	Late, reblooming
<i>Clematis</i> 'Rooguchi'	4-8' x 2-3'	Group 3	Early, bell-shaped
<i>Clematis</i> 'Crystal Fountain'	5-6.5' x 2-3'	Group 2	Late, large-flowering, reblooming
<i>Clematis</i> 'Anita'	6-15' x 2-3'	Group 3	Late, small-flowering
<i>Clematis alpina</i> 'Pink Flamingo'	6.5-13' x 2-3'	Group 1	Early, reblooming, bell-shaped
<i>Clematis</i> 'Doctor Ruppel'	7-9' x 2-3'	Group 2	Early, large-flowering
<i>Clematis</i> 'Fireflame'	7-9' x 2-3'	Group 2	Early, reblooming, double?
<i>Clematis</i> 'Bonanza'	7-10' x 2-3'	Group 3	Late, small-flowering
<i>Clematis</i> 'Kardinal Wyszyński'	8-10' x 2-3'	Group 2	Late, large-flowering
<i>Clematis</i> 'Henryi'	8-10' x 2-3'	Group 2	Early, large-flowering
<i>Clematis</i> 'H.F. Young'	8-12' x 2-3'	Group 2	Early, large-flowering
<i>Clematis montana</i> 'Mayleen'	20-30' x 4-5'	Group 1	Early, small-flowering, fragrant