

Cut Hellebore Water Recipe

from Linda Beutler and Northwest Garden Nursery, Eugene Oregon

<http://northwestgardennursery.com/our-hellebores/culture/>

In a quart of water, add one packet (which equals one level, not heaping) tablespoon of commercial floral preservative, and 2 tablespoons of ethyl alcohol.

Her students use ethyl alcohol containing acetone. For the next best results you could swap isopropyl alcohol for ethyl alcohol (95% ethyl alcohol is available at Oregon Liquor stores).



Tips:

- Use only mature flowers with seed already forming.
- Leave the hellebore stems as long as possible and harvest the stems when the nectaries have fallen off the primary (first to open flower, with secondary buds open or opening).
- Always cut the ends of any cut plant stems at an angle.
- Don't be skimpy with the water; you want at least half of the stem length submerged. In our experiments we used vases that held a quart of solution. *Helleborus X hybridus* stems don't have bark or a tough outer sheath so some water/solution will be absorbed through the sides of the stems as well as being drawn up the cut end.
- Don't overdose the formula by adding more commercial preservative or alcohol. This isn't like cooking with garlic—more is not better.
- If the hellebore stems develop a “cooked” looking cut end after a week or so, simply pull them from the water and cut that portion of the stem off.
- If you don't have commercial preservative, you will still notice better vase life for hellebores by just using the alcohol, still only 2 T. per quart of water.