

# Site Specific Perennials

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Resources used include:

- Sydney McCrea, Master Gardener, Washington State University Master Gardener Program (C186)
- *Better Homes and Gardens*, "Perennial Gardening", 2010

Perennial planting can create a season-long colorful garden escape. Mingling some flowering shrubs, such as hydrangeas and shrub roses with long bloomers like black-eyed susan can transform your flowerbed into a showcase of your personal style. Here are some site specific perennials:

## THE SUNNY GARDEN

Botanical Name	Common Name	Site Recommendations
<i>Achillea filipendula</i>	Yarrow	Full sun, drought resistant. Use in borders, cut and dried flowers.
<i>Aster novae-belgii</i>	Dwarf Aster	Well-drained soil. Use Dwarf for edging and combine with chrysanthemums for fall color.
<i>Chrysanthemum x superbum</i>	Shasta Daisy	Well-drained soil. Use in borders, cut flowers.
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>	Threadleaf Coreopsis	Full sun, dry soil. Drought tolerant. Use a filler in borders, long lasting cut flowers.
<i>Delphinium elatum</i>	Delphinium	Well-drained moisture retentive soil. Use as a background, accent plants. Stake.
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple Coneflower	Sun/part shade, garden soil. Use in borders, cottage gardens, and for naturalizing.
<i>Eremurus x isabellinus</i>	Foxtail Lily	Sun, must have well-drained, deep fertile soil. Use as vertical accent in borders. Most likely found where bulbs are sold.
<i>Geranium</i> species/Cultivars	Hardy Geranium	Full/partial sun. Use as informal edging and in borders. Low growing cultivars in rock gardens.
<i>Hemerocallis</i> species	Daylily	Well drained soil. Use in herb gardens, borders and as low edgings.
<i>Lavandula</i> species. (Not all are hardy)	Lavender	Rich well-drained soil. Accent plant for borders, cutting and dried flowers.
<i>Limonium latifolium</i>	Sea Lavender	Best in light sandy soil. Use as filler in borders, cut and dried flowers.
<i>Paeonia lactiflora</i>	Garden Peony	Well-drained deep fertile soil. Use in borders, accent plant and as a hedge.
<i>Papaver orientale</i>	Oriental Poppy	Moist, well-drained soil. Mixed border, naturalized setting. Foliage dies down after flowering.
<i>Phlox paniculata</i>	Garden Phlox	Moist, well-drained soil. Heavy feeder. Use in massed planting, accent in border. Allow some air circulation to prevent mildew.
<i>Veronica</i> species/cultivars	Speedwell	Sun/partial shade. Well-drained soil. Use tall species in borders, cut flowers.

## THE DRY SUNNY GARDEN

Botanical Name	Common Name	Site Recommendations
<i>Anaphalis triplinervis</i>	Pearly Everlasting	Grows well in evenly moist soil. Tolerates drought. Gray-green foliage. Use for naturalizing, for cut and dried flowers.
<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	Golden Marguerite	Tolerates poor soil. Use in borders, cut flowers. May need staking.
<i>Artemisia cultivars</i>	Wormwood	Thrives in poor dry soil. Use as edgings, in containers, wherever gray foliage is needed.
<i>Echinops ritro</i>	Globe Thistle	Well-drained soil. Tolerates drought. Use at back of borders, cut and dried flowers.
<i>Eryngium amethystinum</i>	Sea Holly	Best in well-drained soil. Tolerates poor dry conditions. Use as an accent in border.
<i>Euphorbia species/cultivars</i>	Spurge	Well-drained soil. Tolerates poor dry conditions. Use as an accent in border.
<i>Festuca ovina</i> & species	Ornamental Fescues	Light, well-drained soil with no added nutrients. Use as edgings, accents. Best color in sun.
<i>Gypsophila paniculata</i>	Baby's Breath	Light well-drained soil. Borders, cut and dried flowers. Cut back after bloom.
<i>Salvia superba</i>	Sage	Best in average to dry, acid, well-drained soil. Use in borders. Team with <i>Achillea</i> "Moonshine".
<i>Santolina chamaecyparissus</i>	Lavender Cotton	Prefers dry heat. Use as a low garden hedge, herb knot gardens. Cut back after bloom.
<i>Sedum spectabile</i>	Showy Sedum	Tolerates infertile conditions, dry soil. Use in borders, with grasses. Leave seed heads for winter interest.
<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	Lamb's Ears	Fertile soil, does tolerate dry soil. Use as an edging, in rock gardens, groundcover.
<i>Thymus species/cultivar</i>	Thyme	Thrives in poor dry soil. Use in rock gardens, edgings, on banks, in low containers.
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Adam's Needle	Best in well-drained sandy soil. Accent or grouped specimens.

## THE MOSTLY SUNNY GARDEN

Botanical Name	Common Name	Site Recommendations
<i>Aruncus dioicus</i> & species	Goatsbeard	Moist well-drained soil. Use at back of borders, accents in shaded sites. Can be used in place of a shrub, but dies back to ground in winter.
<i>Ferns, 'Royal', 'Cinnamon' and 'Ostrich'</i>	Ferns	Moist to wet soil. Use as accents and backgrounds along streams, ponds.
<i>Iris kaempferi</i>	Japanese Iris	Full sun/partial shade. Acid, organic, very moist soil. Use at edge of woodland, near ponds.
<i>Iris siberica</i>	Siberian Iris	Does best in fertile, moist, slightly acid soil. Will tolerate dry soil. Use at edge of ponds, boggy sites. Root system will stabilize a bank.
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Flag	Tolerates wet feet but also grows in regular soil. Can be used in a boggy area, along a stream but can be invasive.
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Helen's Flower	Tolerates cold climates, moist soil. Use in natural settings, as cut flowers. Stake.

<b>Botanical Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Site Recommendations</b>
<i>Ligularia</i> species	Ligularia	Full sun/partial shade. Moist soil. Excellent for waterside plantings or moist borders. Will often wilt during the day in very hot weather even in a moist site.
<i>Macleaya cordata</i>	Plume Poppy	Moist well-drained soil. Fertilizing encourages invasiveness. Beautiful bold accent plant or background plant.
<i>Monarda didyma</i>	Bee Balm	Grows rapidly in moisture retentive, organic soil. Useful as a spreader in natural setting. Control by dividing often if used in a border.
<i>Trollius ledebourii</i>	Globe flower	Best in moist soil. Use in shaded border, boggy meadows, edges of pond or stream.

The amount of sunlight that your garden area receives is one of the most important influences in deciding which perennials you will grow in that site. Even though a good majority of perennials flourish in areas that receive six hours of sun, there are many that produce striking blooms and glorious foliage in reduced amounts of sunlight.

Take some time to gauge the amount of sunlight that reaches your chosen garden location. Assess the light patterns every couple hours throughout the course of the day; make note of areas where shadows linger for long periods. If you are looking at the area in the spring, be sure to consider the trees nearby and adjust for the bare-branches being covered later by leaves which will alter the amount of shade. Make note of whether the areas are receiving morning or afternoon sunlight.

Planting a sun-loving perennial in a shady spot will not necessarily kill the plant but will likely result in fewer flowers, reduced lifespan, and even less color.

## THE SHADY GARDEN

<i>Astilbe</i> species/cultivars	Astilbe	Moist, rich soil. Use as a vertical accent with hostas, ferns in borders, natural areas.
<i>Aquilegia</i> species/cultivars	Columbine	Moist, rich soil. Use in borders, massed plantings. Cut back after flowering for fresh foliage and another flush of bloom.
<i>Dicentra exima</i>	Fringed Bleeding Heart	Fertile, light soil. Use in woodland sites, shaded rock gardens.
<i>Dicentra spectabilis</i>	Bleeding Heart	Full sun if moist. Moist well-drained soil. Use in borders, as specimens. Dies back after bloom.
<i>Digitalis</i> species/cultivars	Foxglove	Partly shaded, rich, moist, well-drained soil. Use as vertical border accents, naturalized settings.
<i>Ferns</i> species/cultivars	Ferns	Moist soil. Use as accents and backgrounds to other plants. Use in woodland plantings.
<i>Hosta</i> species/cultivars	Hosta	Part to deep shade. Moist, rich, well-drained soil. Use in shade gardens, accents, containers.
<i>Primula</i> species/cultivars	Primrose	Sun to deep shade. Peaty soil, do not let dry out. Use in borders, rock gardens natural settings.

## THE DRY SHADY GARDEN

Botanical Name	Common Name	Site Recommendations
<i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>	Bergenia	Sun/shade. Dry to moist soil. Use in borders, as accents, or in containers. Bait for slugs.
<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Lily of the Valley	Tolerates dry soil in shaded areas. Use as groundcovers in shade, over tree and shrub roots.
<i>Dryopteris felix-mas</i>	Male Ferns	Tolerates some dryness if established. Irrigate during a long hot drought.
<i>Epimedium</i> species/cultivars	Bishop's Hat	Shaded, rich moist soil. Tolerates dry soil, will grow over tree roots. Effective weed control.
<i>Helleborus</i> species	Lenten Rose	Moist neutral soil. Tolerates some dryness. Use in borders, accent. Plant where very early bloom can be enjoyed.
<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	Dead Nettle	Well drained soil. Excellent groundcover; can be invasive

### The Facts of Light

Light needs are often expressed as full sun, part sun, part shade, or full shade. These terms refer to the sunlight a plant needs to yield top-notch performances.

**Full sun:** Plants require at least six hours of sun per day.

**Part sun:** Plants should receive three to six hours of sun per day, preferably in morning or evening, not during the hottest parts of the day.

**Part shade:** Plants will thrive with three to six hours of sun per day, but definitely require shade during the afternoon, when the sun is the hottest. These conditions describe plants tucked beneath a tree where the sun slants in during the morning or on the east side of a building.

**Full shade:** Plants need fewer than three hours of direct sun per day. Filtered sunlight or light shade is necessary for the rest of the day. This could describe plants on the north side of a structure or under a spreading tree where sunlight briefly penetrates the canopy at some point during the day.

As printed by Better Homes and Gardens, *Selecting Perennials*

### Understanding Plant Names at a Glance

It is very important to not refer to plants with the common name.

#### Cultivar name:

The cultivar name is assigned to the plant by the breeder. Garden centers, gardening catalogs and nurseries commonly refer to a plant's cultivar name.

#### Genus name:

The *genus* is the first word in a plant's *botanical name*. Think of this as the plant's surname. As an example, the Rudbeckia plant genus has several members.

#### Species name:

The specific *epithet*, or species, is the second name in the plant's botanical name. This is how the plant is specifically identified, thus separating it from all others in its genus. However, it is meaningless if not combined with the plant's genus name i.e. Rudbeckia fulgida.

#### Common name:

As mentioned before, common names of plants tend to fluctuate. What one person may call a black-eyed susan, another may refer to it as a Rudbeckia plant.