Sweet Pea

Lathyrus odoratus



Sweet Pea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Sweetpea

Description:

A beloved garden classic, featuring a wide array of colorful flowers that are wonderfully scented; an annual flowering vine that grows on slender stems; prune before seeds form to keep under control

Ornamental Features

Sweet Pea features showy racemes of fragrant violet pea-like flowers with lavender overtones along the stems from late spring to early fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its oval compound leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Sweet Pea is an herbaceous annual with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Sweet Pea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Sweet Pea will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. As a climbing vine, it should either be planted near a fence, trellis or other landscape structure where it can be trained to grow upwards on it, or allowed to trail off a retaining wall or slope. This fast-growing annual will normally live for one full growing season, needing replacement the following year. However, this species tends to self-seed and may thereby endure for years in the garden if allowed.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America..

Sweet Pea is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.