

Flower Bulb Tips

When do you trim? Tips from Jerry Baker:

As soon as the blooms faded on your spring flowering bulbs, pick off the seed pods, but wait as long as you can to cut off the stems (until they turn brown).

Hyacinths, daffodils and tulips need healthy stems to help fatten up the bulb for next year's flower. When the rest of the foliage finally turns brown, fasten it in a tight ball around the stem with a piece of string,

Once the foliage completely dries up in late spring, you can cut off just above the ground level. If you decide to dig up your hardy bulbs in order to divide or move them you should do this just when the foliage dies. But in that case, don't cut off the foliage off. Try to break them apart and replant them right away.



Critters: The average backyard is full of critters that want to sink their chops into your bulbs. Here's some tricks:

Critter	Control
Gophers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before you plant bulbs, line the bottom and sides of holes with ½ inch mesh wire. Set it about 3 inches below deepest planted bulbs • Include bluebells in your bulb garden gophers won't go near them
Mice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle the bed with a fence made of fine mesh wire that extends 3 to 4 inches above ground and 6 to 8 inches below • Don't mulch until after the ground has frozen solid
Squirrels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After you've planted bulbs, lay a piece of hardware wire or an old window screen over the bed, and cover with about ¼ inch of soil. Once the ground has settled, remove the screen, and put it away until next year. • Plant lots of daffodils-it's the one bulb that squirrels won't touch.
Voles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprinkle Bon Ami cleansing powder into holes before planting bulbs.
All diggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy a bulb protector from a garden center (see picture)

