

**Common Name:**

Peony

**Plant Type:** Perennial**Light Requirements:**

Full Sun-light shade

**Height:** 2-7 ft

depending on type

**Bloom Time:** May-June**Hardiness Zones:** 3-8

## Peony

Peonies are part of the plant family Paeoniaceae. Within the single genus *Paeonia*, there are approximately 30-40 species of peonies. These showy plants are native to the northern hemisphere, mainly Asia and Europe.

There are three general types of peonies: Herbaceous peonies die back completely during the winter. Tree peonies are deciduous shrubs with woody stems. Itoh hybrids (hybrids between tree and herbaceous peonies) are deciduous and have short woody stems that develop new leaves in spring. Bloom time between the three types is typically staggered, with tree peonies flowering first in early to mid-May, followed by herbaceous peonies in late May, then Itoh hybrids which bloom in late Spring.

Peonies have large flowers in shades of white, pink, red, yellow, and coral. Flowers are often quite large and multi-petaled and may require staking to support the weight of the bloom. Herbaceous and Itoh peonies thrive in full sun to light shade in zones 3-8. Tree peonies prefer either dappled shade or protection from afternoon sun. All peonies prefer fertile soil with good drainage and should be planted with good air circulation to avoid fungal diseases. Herbaceous and Itoh peonies should be cut back to the ground in the fall and discard leaves and stems in the trash to prevent harboring over pests or fungal issues. Tree peonies should be left standing after they lose their leaves, as buds for new growth develop along the woody stems.

Peonies are generally considered deer and rabbit resistant. Ants may appear on the flower buds but are totally harmless.

References:

<https://extension.psu.edu/the-beloved-peony>

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/paeonia-hybrids/>