

Tuberous Begonias

Tuberous begonias have been developed from species native to Central and South America. They are ideal garden border plants and perfect for pots or hanging baskets. Begonias are suitable for growing in all areas of New Zealand, but should only be planted outdoors when frosts are over in spring.

There are many different types of begonias available, in a wide range of colours and forms. The most common types are Pendular – suitable for hanging baskets; Non-Stop – ideal for garden borders; Fimbriata and Camellia flowered – perfect for large pots.

Because they originate from tropical forested regions, they require warm growing temperatures and bright shade, with some protection from midday summer sun. Best results will be achieved using a humus rich, well-drained growing medium.

The tubers should have small shoots visible on them before planting out; shooting can be hurried along by placing the tubers in a warm area indoors in early spring. Begonias form roots all over the surface of the tuber, so when the shoots are under way, the tubers should be planted approximately 5 cm deep to allow a good cover for the roots.



*Fimbriata Begonia
First Light*



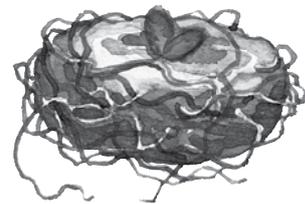
*Camellia Begonia
Firestorm*



*Non-Stop Begonia
Cameo*



*Pendular Begonia
Avalanche*



Water in after planting, but in the following weeks water only when the mixture is dry on top and be careful of over watering as this is the most common cause of failure with Begonias. In the early stages of growth, it is best to keep the pot in a warm area with some light ventilation. Once the plants are established, and frosts are well past, the pots or hanging baskets can be moved outdoors. Water the plants late in the day, as watering in full sun will cause burning of the leaves. Removing old flower heads will encourage further flowering and bushing of the plants.

Cooler weather and the first frosts in autumn will stop growth of the plants and the foliage will die back. It is best if the tubers are harvested and stored during winter. When harvesting, clean the remains of the old stems away and brush off any soil or potting mixture. Make sure the tubers are thoroughly dry before storing in a cool and dry place.