



Forever & Ever Fantasia Hydrangea

## Hydrangea Care

-Jean Ann Van Krevelen

I have a long-standing love affair with *Hydrangeas*. When I was (much) younger and there were fewer varieties, I spent hours working out bloom times and colors, pruning methods, sun/shade combinations and fertilizer formulas. It felt a lot like algebra...and believe me, I am no mathematical genius.

If I were to create a mathematical formula for my process, it would look something like this:

*Available space in border + bloom month + (sun ± shade ± part shade ± full sun ± full shade) + fertilizer + water requirements + good soil + {pruning x (old wood or new wood)} ÷ fatigue of gardener = gorgeous flowers*

It became so complicated that I gave up growing them and stuck to buying the cut ones for arrangements.

Thankfully, times have changed and there are now glorious, reblooming *Hydrangeas* that require far less care (and math.) These shrubs are filled with flirty, feminine flowers from spring until frost and are available in a variety of colors, textures and sizes.

If I were to create a formula for success in growing **Forever & Ever® Hydrangeas**, it would be this:

*(Border or container space) + good soil + balanced fertilizer + adequate water + morning sun/afternoon shade = gorgeous flowers*

Notice how I left out pruning? That's because these *Hydrangeas* bloom on both old and new wood. That means that you will have blooms on woody stems from the previous year and on new growth that emerges in spring. Even if you do no pruning at all, you will have beautiful blooms! If you can't let go of the need to prune, just remove the spent flowers and any dead wood and you are good to go.

General care is simplified, too. Find a site with morning sun and afternoon shade. Plant in compost-amended soil, apply a balanced fertilizer and water well. Be sure to water regularly the first year so that roots have a chance to really develop. Oh, and don't forget there are different sizes that can be grown in spaces ranging from a container to a border.

Now, let's talk about color. **Forever & Ever®** offers a wide variety of choices. There are the more traditional **Forever & Ever® Blue Heaven** and **Forever & Ever® Together Hydrangeas**, with flowers that can range from electric blue to vibrant pink. Then, there's the white double,

*(Hydrangea Care Continued)*

**Forever & Ever® Peace**, whose flowers start a lovely light green, then mature to crisp white. There are also new varieties that are covered with colors like apricot, chartreuse, deep red and mauve. Two of my favorites are **Forever & Ever® Pistachio Hydrangea** and **Forever & Ever® Fantasia Hydrangea**.

If you want more information (along with some cute illustrations), Forever & Ever® has a couple of free downloadable PDF's and a FAQ page that should answer any lingering questions. The fact is that growing these *Hydrangeas* is incredibly simple... so much so, that I don't think I'll even need my calculator. 🌸



Forever & Ever Pistachio Hydrangea



### **About the Author-**

Jean Ann Van Krevelen is an avant gardener, social media fanatic and non-snooty foodie. She is the co-author of *Grocery Gardening: Planting, Preparing and Preserving Fresh Food*. Her photography and writing has appeared in a variety of traditional and digital publications including *Fine Gardening*, *GreenProfit*, and the *Chicago Sun Times*.

Jean Ann is the *National Garden Guru* blogger for the Proven Winners website. She writes for her own blog at [GardenertoFarmer.net](http://GardenertoFarmer.net) and is

one half of the slightly off-kilter podcasting team at [GoodEnoughGardening.com](http://GoodEnoughGardening.com). She is also the President of White Willow Media, a company whose focus is providing traditional and new media marketing for the horticulture and garden writing industries. White Willow Media's client list includes: *Proven Winners*, *Ball Publishing*, *Garden Writers Association*, *Timber Press*, and *Storey Publishing*.

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