

## Astilbe - Growing Guide

### Growing Astilbe – False Goat's Beard

Astilbe are some of the easiest and most rewarding rhizomatous perennial, clump forming, herbaceous plants to grow in any British garden. In the wild in China and North America they grow in moist sites in mountain ravines, woodland edges and beside streams. They are grown primarily for their plume-like flowers of varying heights and lengths. The flowers can be red, white, pink or purple and plant breeders have progressively improved the varieties which are currently available.

Smaller, dwarf varieties are more suited to pot growing, border edges or rockeries. Medium sized varieties can fit into most border designs and taller growing forms suit the back of the border or alongside a stream or pond. With a careful selection from the varieties which we list you can ensure a lengthy flowering season from late April on into July. Astilbe varieties do not all flower at the same time and the more dwarf forms are usually the last to perform.

Astilbe complement many other well-known border plants but their greatest value may well be in moist boggy areas beside water which is their natural environment for thriving. Bog iris, rheum, candelabra primula and gunnera are regular and normal plant associations.

Astilbe will grow well in full sun but only where their roots will stay moist and not dry out in hot conditions. If you are concerned about this grow your astilbe in partial shade. Astilbe prefer fertile soil and will not prosper in chalky soils.

If your plants have naturalised beside water they are probably best left well alone. However, in a border context, best practice would be to lift and divide astilbe clumps every three or four years. Discard the older woody rhizomes and replant the most vigorous side shoots which you have

severed from the original clump. You can do this in spring or in autumn. It may be an idea, if worried about late frosts, to keep the new plants in moist trays of leaves or soil over winter in the greenhouse before replanting outside in the spring.

If your plants get stressed in hot periods they may develop powdery mildew but this is seldom a long term problem in this versatile, hardy and prolific genus of garden favourites.



Astilbe 'Chocolate Fascination'



Astilbe 'Deutschland'



Astilbe 'Fanal'



Astilbe 'Gertrude Brix'



Astilbe 'Hennie Graafland'



Astilbe 'Inshriach Pink'



Astilbe 'Inshriach Pink'



Astilbe 'Inshriach Pink'



Astilbe 'Rheinland'



Astilbe 'Vesuvius'



Astilbe 'Vesuvius'

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/bi742e0gvRE>

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