



Hebes

Hebes are evergreen shrubs native to New Zealand, where they are found in most habitats. These plants range in hardiness. Though in general, the smaller the leaf the harder the Hebe. These shrubs are wonderful additions for year-round garden interest with their glossy, interesting foliage and summer & fall flowers. Since they are evergreen, they require sun, protection from drying winds, and excellent drainage.

Bees & butterflies love the flowers of these plants. Planting in borders, as low growing hedges, or as small foundation plants are only a few ways to utilize these shrubs. Since most varieties do not grow larger than 4 feet and are easily pruned, they are also wonderful container plant.

Planting Tips

Pick a site that is appropriate for the Hebe variety. Varieties that are slightly less hardy, for example varieties with larger succulent leaves, need winter protection from drying winds. Prepare the hole by incorporating 20% organic matter, such as compost into you native soil. Planting on a mound, raised bed or slope will help ensure better drainage. The hole should be twice as large as the root ball. Loosen the root ball and place in the hole so the top of the plant is slightly above the soil surface. Backfill, using a mixture of your native soil & organic matter. Water in well and add more soil mixture as the backfill settles. Create a slight berm (raised edge) around the outside edge of the root ball. This will encourage water into the area around the roots.

Pruning

Pruning Hebes will encourage a more compact shrub with a good form. Any winter damage can be removed in the spring when the buds begin to grow. Prune just below the damage to a new bud. Otherwise, prune after flowering to encourage re-bloom and a nice shape.

If established plants are overgrown, it is better to prune in small increments over several months than all at once. As with pruning winter damage, prune to a new bud. On smaller varieties remove a few inches. Larger varieties can be pruned to a bud 6-10 inches below the top.