

How to Divide and Plant Bearded Irises

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Edited by Harriet Robinson)*

Divide bearded iris after the bloom is over, so the new roots have a chance to grow. For medians, that is very soon if not now. Median rhizomes will be sold at our show. For tall bearded, use the same instructions in July:

1. Dig out the rhizomes, knocking off most of the dirt. Be sure you get the roots.
2. Pull the clump apart, or cut the new growth off with a sharp knife. Save out the new part, and throw the older growth out.
3. Wash the divisions, cut the foliage back to about 6-8", dry, and write the name of the variety on each fan if you plan to donate it. To keep divisions in your own garden, you will also want to keep track of the name.



Cut at the red arrow. Photo from waysidegardenvoices.com/dividing-irises-and-daylilies/



Photo from the American Iris Society website

To plant rhizomes, including those you buy at our show or July auction, dig a hole and make a hill in the middle. Place your iris on top of the hill, spreading the roots out around the side of the hill and down. If the roots weren't clipped to about 4", you may do so. These serve as anchors; new roots will grow. Fill in the hole, patting down the soil firmly, then water to.