

## **BOUGAINVILLEA CARE**

Bougainvillea are flowering machines. You can't beat them for an explosion of color. The basic

the cycle of care for a Bougainvillea is: place it in full sun, water it a couple of times a week allow the plant to dry out between waterings, and feed it regularly and heavily every 2 -3 weeks during and after the bloom cycle, prune it aggressively to maintain the shape that you want to keep it in, and then just plain and simply get away from it and ignore it. Enjoy the blooms, but always remember this is not a "froo'froo" plant. It's a weed!

Following are more detailed tips

- 1.** Place Bougainvillea in a full sun, wind-protected area. As long as the temps do not reach 32 degrees or lower, it is perfectly fine to leave Bougainvillea outside. If this recommendation is disregarded and the Bougainvillea is moved from outdoors to indoors regularly, it will serve to confuse the plant which may cause it to react by prematurely dropping bracts/blooms and foliage as it reverts to a self-preservation mode. If they are planted in the ground and have their roots protected with a very thick mulching layer some can survive lower temperatures and come back from the rootstock and the San Diego Red Bougainvillea is known for its ability to tolerate temps down to 20F.
- 2.** Bougainvillea is drought tolerant and should only require watering once a week. Excessive watering will result in immediate and premature bloom drop. Visually, when you see a Bougainvillea leaf begin to curl, the plant has just spoken volumes to you.....Please give me a drink!
- 3.** Under ideal growing conditions, you can expect a bloom cycle of 4 to 6 weeks, and in some cases, even longer.
- 4.** Bougainvillea likes to be root-bound. They can be happy in a container for several years before needing to be re-potted.
- 5.** When the Bougainvillea concludes its' bloom cycle and drops its' blooms, it should be immediately pruned. Many people are afraid to seriously prune Bougainvilleas, which over time causes them to

lose shape. Don't be afraid to cut it. Bougainvillea bloom on new wood. The more pruning cuts, the more bud, and ultimately the more blooms that will cluster.

6. After pruning, give the plant a healthy dose of Osmocote Plant Food or any well-balanced, time-released fertilizer. Water the fertilizer in.
7. Two to three weeks later, feed the Bougainvillea a high phosphorous, bloom-boosting type of fertilizer, such as Scotts Super Bloom, High Phosphorous, or Bougainvillea-specific fertilizer. Bougainvillea are heavy eaters, so give them a hearty dose. Continue the 2 -3 week feedings. Additionally, on a 3-week cycle apply one tablespoon of Epsom salts in a gallon of water. It will take approximately 4-5 weeks to re-enter the next blooming cycle. Always keep in mind that when any of the fertilizing treatments are administered the watering-in process that accompanies the fertilizing counts as one of the twice-a-week waterings.

**\*\*\*NOW SIT BACK AND ENJOY YOUR STUNNING BOUGAINVILLEA \*\***

