

# blooming plant of the month

# chrysanthemum



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Photos: Syngenta Flowers - GoldFisch® Vegetative



Spider form  
'Winnipeg'



Daisy form  
'Cinnamon Pueblo'

## in-store and consumer care

**LIGHT** Place potted mums in moderately bright to bright light, but protect them from direct midday sun.

**WATER** Keep soil consistently moist at all times. This likely will require watering several times each week, if not every day, depending on how root bound a plant is. Under watering results in wilted blooms and leaves, and wilting shortens the life of the plant.

**TEMPERATURE** Potted mums prefer cool environments (55 F to 65 F). Room temperatures higher than 70 F will shorten flowering time and plant life. If necessary, these plants can be stored in a floral cooler at temperatures as low as 33 F for up to six days.

**HUMIDITY** Mist leaves occasionally if plants are in dry environments.

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY** Most varieties of

## BOTANICAL NAMES

*Dendranthema X grandiflorum*

(den-DRAN-thuh-muh  
grand-i-FLOR-um)

syn: *Chrysanthemum X morifolium*

## COMMON NAMES

Chrysanthemum, Mum, Florist mum

## DESCRIPTION

Chrysanthemums have "composite" flower heads of ray flowers (petal-like florets) and disk flowers (tiny florets in the center), in a range of forms and sizes. The most common bloom forms for pot mums are daisy, decorative (cushion, *Dahlia*-type, etc.), spider, spoon-tip, quill and anemone (mounded cushionlike center). Stems are leafy and either branched, with multiple flowers per stem, or dis-

chrysanthemums are fairly resistant to the effects of ethylene gas.

**PLANT FOOD** Fertilizing is not needed at the retail or consumer levels.

**GROOMING** Remove faded blooms, damaged buds and yellow leaves daily.

**REBLOOMING** Most people dispose of florist mums after the blooms fade because the plants are not hardy in cold climates; however, if you want to transplant one outdoors, cut the stems back to 3 inches after flowering, and keep the pruned plant in a cool but frost-free place until spring, after the chance of hard freezes has passed. In warm climates, florist mums should revert to their natural growth habits.

## challenges

**PESTS** Aphids and red spider mites can be problems. If plants are not too badly infested, rinse them with an insecticidal soap, and water them with a systemic insecticide. Discard badly infested plants.

**BUDS FAIL TO OPEN** Causes include not enough light, the plant was too immature when taken from the greenhouse and severe stress during transit.

**FOLIAGE TURNS YELLOW OR BROWN** This is a relatively common occurrence for florist mums although it can be exacerbated by not

budded, with a single bloom per stem.

## COLORS

Potted chrysanthemums are available in lavender, purple, red-violet, burgundy, red, pink, orange, coral, salmon, yellow, bronze, butterscotch, cream and white, as well as bicolors.

## DECORATIVE LIFE

These plants typically last for two to four weeks (sometimes longer), depending on variety, maturity at the time of sale and the care they receive. The ideal stage for mums to be sold is when plants have a few open blooms along with a mass of buds that are showing color.

## AVAILABILITY

Potted mums are available year-round.

enough light and under watering. (See "In-Store and Consumer Care: Grooming," left.)

## fun facts

**WHAT'S IN A NAME** The botanical name "*Dendranthema*" comes from the Greek words *dendron* (tree) and *anthos* or *anthe-mon* (flower), in reference to these plants' somewhat woody stems. "Chrysanthemum" is from the Greek words *chrysos* (golden) and *anthos* or *anthe-mon* (flower). The specific epithet "*grandiflorum*" means large flowered. The "X" in the botanical name means the plant is a hybrid of at least two species.

**FAMILY MATTERS** Chrysanthemums are members of the huge *Asteraceae* (*Compositae*) family. Close relatives include *Gerberas*, *Dahlias*, *Zinnias*, marguerites, sunflowers, marigolds, China asters and many more. **sfr**

(See more chrysanthemum "Fun Facts" on Page 16.)

Some information provided by:  
*Chain of Life Network*®, [www.chainoflife.org](http://www.chainoflife.org)  
*Complete Houseplant Survival Manual*, The,  
by Barbara Pleasant

*Flower & Plant Care: The 21st Century Approach*,  
by Terril A. Nell, Ph.D. and Michael S. Reid, Ph.D.  
*House Plant Expert*, The, by Dr. D.G. Hessayon  
*Stearn's Dictionary of Plant Names for Gardeners*,  
by William T. Stearn