

For instant color, use pansies grown in four-inch containers. For smaller jobs, cell packs may be used; however, remember that root systems typically are less developed and may take longer to become established in the landscape.

A guideline for spacing plants is 9 to 12 inches. For instant mass color, plant 6 inches apart. Spacing more than 15 inches apart is not recommended because plants generally do not grow large enough to fill the space.

In the North where the before-freeze growing period is short, Smith recommends planting "good and tight for best show." He grows in 3 1/2- and 4-inch containers, and plants them pot-to-pot for mass color.

Dig planting holes slightly larger than the rootball. Pansies should be planted at the same depth as they are growing when purchased. After planting, gently firm the soil around the base of the plant and water thoroughly.

**Selection and care**—Pansies are simple to care for. Natural moisture is usually enough, and they shouldn't need fertilization. Mulching, however, is recommended.

To encourage more blooming of pansies growing in small beds, maintenance crews could deadhead the flowers manually.

TABLE 3.

### SIZES OF PANSIES

**Miniatures:** Pansies with the smallest size blossoms are called violas or johnny-jump-ups. The tiny-faced, fragrant blossoms are used mostly in residential landscapes and in container plantings.

**Small-flowered:** With a flower size of approximately 2 inches in diameter, these pansies produce a continuous flush of color with multiple blooms. Mass plant in beds, 6 to 8 inches apart, for best show of color.

**Mid-size:** These pansies provide a good flush of color with a slightly larger flower, approximately 3 inches in diameter. The flowers are held above the foliage for best color show. They are good for fall and spring color. Many also are bred to flower under the short days of winter in mind climates. Space plants 8 to 10 inches apart.

**Large-flowered:** While these pansies have flowers 4 inches and larger in diameter, they are not as floriferous as many smaller varieties. They require more dead-heading for maximum flush of color.

In some southern sites where overnight temperatures can drastically change, polypropylene covers can protect the plants. In the North, some landscapers cover plants with hay.

Landscapers have many choices as to size, color and with or without faces. The selection of colors in recent years has shifted toward solid colors as mass plantings.

Regardless of the variety selected, landscape professionals across the country can count on this easy-care annual to provide long-lasting color in fall and spring.

—This article was written by Sherry Harlass, a communications specialist with J&S Creative Group, Arlington, Texas. It was funded and reviewed by the Professional Plant Growers Association, P.O. Box 27517, Lansing, MI 48909; (517) 694-7700.

TABLE 4.

### PLANTING TIPS

**Soil:**

well-draining, rich, organic mixture

**Light:**

mostly sunny to part shade sites

**Fall planting:**

4 to 6 weeks before first frost

**Spacing:**

6- to 12-inch centers

TABLE 5.

### OPTIONAL MAINTENANCE

**Water:**

supplemental irrigation during dry spells or in dry climates

**Fertilizer:**

one-time application during growing season

**Grooming:**

manually remove (deadhead) spent blossoms

**Overwintering:**

cover with landscape fabric when temperatures plummet

## Factors to consider when choosing wood

Outdoor structures, which landscape managers must by necessity deal with, have to be weather- and insect-resistant. So only certain woods are suitable for this environment.

Cedar, redwood and pressure-treated woods are the three types of durable woods most often recommended. Georgia-Pacific lists the attributes for these landscape woods:

### **Cedar**

*Used for decks, walks, fences.*

- Noted for its beauty, durability and resistance to decay.
- Ranges in color from a light cream tone to a deep cinnamon red and in texture from knotty to clear.
- Resists shrinking, swelling, warping.
- Easy to work with.
- Weathers well without applying a protective finish, but exterior finishes such as water repellents, stains and bleaching oils will enhance its resistance to decay.

### **Redwood**

*Used for decks, fences, furniture.*

- Can range in color from a tawny tone to a deep cinnamon red, and in texture from knotty to clear.
- Highly favored as decking material because of its classic color and grain, as well as its resistance to decay.
- Easy to work with.
- Weathers well without applying a protective finish. Exterior finishes such as water repellents, stains and bleaching oils will enhance its resistance to decay.

### **Pressure-treated Southern pine**

*Used for decks and fencing.*

- Pressure treatment forces a preservative into lumber, making it resistant to insects and decay.
- The lumber has a distinctive pale green tint which, if left unstained, will weather to a rustic gray.
- Finishes well. While staining or painting is not necessary, it is often desired for cosmetic purposes. Applying a water-repellent sealer over the wood is recommended.
- Because it contains chemicals, pressure-treated wood requires special care in handling.
- Considerably less expensive than cedar and redwood.