



Flowering Shrubs: Mock Orange (*Philadelphus*)

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Mock Orange are Very Fragrant

Best known for its fragrant white flowers in early spring, this hardy shrub is named for the similarity of the flowers to those of citrus trees.

Varieties to Plant

Mock orange come in several varieties including doubles and even one that has golden flowers. Some varieties are more fragrant than others, so if you are unsure, it might be wise to purchase when they are in flower. Some double varieties are *P. 'Buckley's Quill'*, *Philadelphus 'Snowbelle'*, *Philadelphus x virginicus 'Minnesota Snowflake'*, while *P. 'Galahad'* is a single variety. The golden variety is *Philadelphus coronarius 'Aureus'*.

Preferred Conditions

Mock orange are one of the few flowering shrubs that do not mind partial shade. They will also do well in full sun. The shrub will rapidly grow to about 2 m. or more in height in most urban soils and conditions, as long as it is not allowed to dry out.

Care and Pruning

Annual pruning is best, taking out any dead wood and thinning out older stems to keep the shrub in a pleasing shape and to allow air to flow through. In order not to eliminate the current year flowers, pruning should be done just after flowering in the spring. Overgrown shrubs can be severely pruned by taking most if not all branches to the ground. You will lose a year's flowers but new vigorous stems will shoot up from the crown. Never prune past the end of August. You can propagate by nicking a lower branch and holding it to the earth with a brick. New roots should form and you can cut this off the mother plant when established.

Problems you Might Encounter

Mock orange are mostly free of problems but can suffer from various fungal and bacterial diseases. The best prevention for these is to keep the shrub pruned so that the air flows through and to remove any diseased branches and disposing of them (but not in your composter). Any stress such as pruning late in fall, or drought can cause increased vulnerability to disease.

Learn more about Mock Orange [here>](#)