how to plant and grow nerine bowdenii

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Nerine bowdenii is a brilliant pink, autumn flowering bulb, which will flower for years once they have settled in.

**Planting**

Plant your bulbs as soon as they arrive, each one into a 9cm pot filled with a mixture of 50% multipurpose compost and 50% loam based potting compost, such as John Innes No 2.

When planting, make sure that the roots are spread out and only the bottom half of the bulbs are below the compost level. The top half of the bulb must remain above it. Wait until the roots fill the pot before planting out into the garden, at the same level.

They do best in a well-drained site with full sun and love it at the base of a sunny, south-facing wall. A good summer baking encourages plenty of flowers in autumn. Water them in well.

**In pots and containers**

Nerines do well in pots permanently. Use the same compost mix as above, planting so the tip of the bulbs show above the compost surface. Bring them inside when in flower for brilliant and long-lasting houseplants, moving them outside again when they’ve gone over.

**Care and Maintenance**

In cold areas, mulch clumps when they’ve finished flowering for winter protection. If you think the flowers are getting less, year on year, feed in summer with a potash-rich fertiliser.

Nerines hate disturbance, so once planted try to avoid moving them. After planting, the bulbs should grow some strap shaped leaves until mid summer, and then they will die down. If we have a wet summer they may remain green. In September/October flower spikes will emerge and bloom without the foliage. Avoid planting next to narcissus (daffodils).

If there are no blooms in the first autumn, don’t worry. Nerines are notoriously temperamental when they have been moved/replanted. They will flower the following year. After many years the bulbs will become congested. Do not divide them as they flower much better when grown like this.