

Kentucky Garden Flowers

Petunia

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Petunias have been a popular garden flower in Kentucky for more than 50 years. The first hybrids were introduced in the 1950's and there have been many improvements in the plants since then. Petunias bloom prolifically all summer producing showy, large flowers of nearly every color. In the 1990s, a small flowered petunia, *Calibrachoa*, was introduced and used primarily for hanging baskets and containers. There are now over 75 varieties available from a number of companies.

Petunia – *Petunia x hybrida*

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
pink, purple, blue, yellow, white, and red	8"- 30"	summer	Aphids, high soil pH	borders, beds, containers	seeds or cuttings

Performance - Petunias are good to outstanding annual flowers in Kentucky gardens. They require full sun, regular fertilizer and regular watering in ground beds or containers. Removal of spent flowers and stems increases the production of flowers in the older types. The new types, 'Wave', 'Surfinia', 'Supertunia', etc., don't need pruning to stimulate flowering if they are growing vigorously.

Comments - Traditional varieties are generally smaller and less vigorous than the new types, however, these types are still good performers. In the 1990s, breeders found new types, spreading petunias that changed petunias dramatically. These spreading petunias may be too vigorous for easy care in containers because they may need water 1-2 times every day in the summer. The new varieties make a spectacular show in large containers and ground beds because they are so vigorous and flower continuously, but they also require fertilizer every 3-4 weeks and water every 3-5 days in ground beds or fertilizer each week and water every 1-2 days in containers.

Varieties -

traditional types -

- milliflora – smallest flowers – 'Fantasy' series,
- multiflora – many smaller flowers – 'Carpet' series, 'Celebrity' series, 'Horizon' series, 'Primetime' series, 'Summertime Blues',
- floribunda – medium size flowers – 'Madness' series,
- grandiflora – largest flowers – 'Cloud' series, 'Daddy' series, 'Dreams' series, 'Eagle' series, 'Falcon' series, 'Frost' series, 'Hula hoop' series, 'Picotee' series, 'Prism' series, 'Storm' series, 'Supercascade' series, 'Supermagic'



'Bravo Sky Blue'

series, 'Titan' series, 'Ultra' series, 'Yellow Magic'

- double – 'Bonanza', 'Double Madness' series, 'Double Cascade' series, 'Pirouette' series, 'Sonata'
- spreading types from seed** – 'Wave' series (Coral, Misty Lilac, Purple, Pink, Rose), 'Avalanche' series
spreading types from cuttings – 'Cascadia' ('Doubloon' and 'Petitunia') series, 'Supertunia' series, 'Surfinia' series,
upright types from seed – 'Tidal Wave' series



Petunia basket at Sakata Seed America



'Dolce' from Michell's Seed Company



'Easy Wave Beachcomber' mix



'Madness Red Morn'



'Explorer Pink'



'Merlin Salmon'

Trailing Petunia – *Calibrachoa x hybrida*

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
yellow, white, pink, red, lavender, purple	6"- 18"	spring, summer, fall	aphids, iron deficiency, root disease	containers, baskets, bedding plants	cuttings

Performance – Calibrachoa is an outstanding, all purpose annual flower that performs well during spring, summer and fall in Kentucky. This plant is a close relative of petunia and has small petunia-like flowers. Be sure to fertilize these plants regularly. Typical fertilizers have an acid effect on potting soil and trailing petunia needs acid conditions in the potting soil.

Comments – Trailing petunia is one of the best hanging baskets sold. It produces a great show and is easier to care for than ‘Wave’ petunia baskets.

Varieties – ‘Million Bells’ series, ‘Superbells’ series, ‘Liricashowers’ series, ‘Celebration’ series, ‘Callie’ series, ‘Trailing’ series.



‘Superbells Tickled Pink’



‘Callie Scarlet’



‘Million Bells Terra Cotta’



‘Celebration Red’

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