



All About Hydrangea Flower Color

Some varieties of Hydrangeas will change their flower color from pink to blue, or blue to pink, depending on the pH (acidity or alkalinity) of the soil.

Do all Hydrangeas change color?

Most mophead (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) and lacecap (*H. serrata*) will be blue when grown in acidic soils, and pink in alkaline soils. Cape Cod has naturally acidic soils and in most areas if you do nothing your Hydrangea flowers will be blue.

White Hydrangeas will always be white, although white types of *Hydrangea macrophylla* that have a touch of pink can turn to be tinted with blue. White Hydrangeas such as the *H. arborescens* (Annabelle etc.) or *H. paniculata* (Limelight etc.) will always be white no matter what the pH of the soil is. Some panicle varieties (*H. paniculata*) flowers will turn pink as they age, but nothing turns them blue.

Can I make my pale blue flowers a deeper blue?

Depth of color is genetic, and can't be altered much. A pale blue flower will be pale pink or pale blue, never dark blue. A dark pink may become deep blue or purple in acidic soil. Some pink varieties don't change much at all, no matter the soil's pH.

Why do I see so many pink Hydrangeas in the garden center?

Many growers raise all of their plants in a neutral pH potting mix, which means that the Hydrangeas you buy might have pink flowers. Unless the variety was bred to stay pink, these will turn blue in our normally acidic Cape Cod soils.

My Hydrangeas are just opening, and they are whiter this year!

Most mopheads are more white or cream color as they first start to open. The blue or pink shades deepen as the flowers grow and mature.

Why have my blue flowers turned pink this summer?

Soil sometimes turns more alkaline from lime applied to a lawn, or from leaching from cement or stone dust on foundations or walkways. Even water that is alkaline can sweeten soil over time. In these cases, use sulfur or aluminum sulfate to lower the pH again. Use each of these according to the directions on the package, and know that it takes time to work. Too much aluminum sulfate can damage plants.

My blue Hydrangeas turn brown in mid-summer. Help!

When mopheads or lacecaps are grown in hot, afternoon sun they will burn and brown by the end of July. These plants keep their color the longest when grown where they are protected from afternoon sun.

How do I keep Hydrangeas sky-blue into the fall?

You can't. These flowers naturally turn other shades of blue, lavender and even burgundy as they age. Enjoy their range of colors, and keep them deeply watered so that the flowers last until hard frost.