

## Iris Care Guide

### *How to grow and care for your Iris*



#### **Site Selection:**

Choose a position in your garden that receives sun for at least half the day. Irises will not bloom without sufficient sunlight. Irises prefer a slightly acid soil – pH5.5 to 7 and soil that drains well. Try to locate your Iris in a bed where there is minimal root competition and shading from other plants.

#### **Planting:**

The best time to plant is mid to late summer.

Loosen the soil with a garden fork to a depth of 30-40cm then add 5-10cm layer of compost and dig in organic pelletised fertiliser such as Organic Extra at the recommended rate.

#### **Watering:**

Good drainage is the first requirement of caring for irises.

Newly planted irises should be watered twice a day (for the first week), in the absence of rain.

Established irises should be watered weekly from September through to May, in the absence of rain, meanwhile watering from June through to August is unnecessary unless winter is exceptionally dry.

#### **Fertiliser:**

Iris are not heavy feeders – if you fertilise at planting then an application again in early spring is sufficient. Avoid high-nitrogen fertilisers as this may encourage rot. Given that Iris prefer a slightly acid environment using an organic Azalea & Camellia food is also recommended.

#### **Care:**

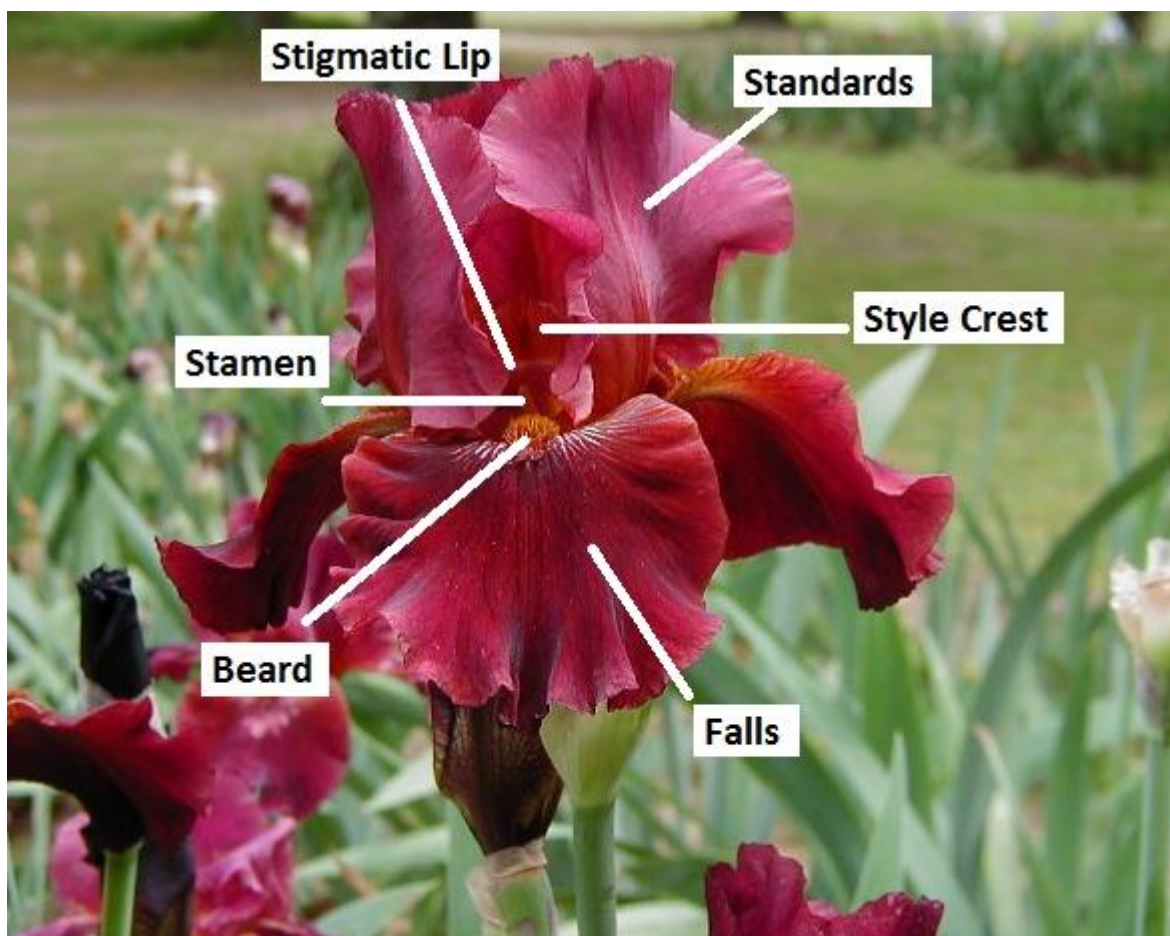
You won't need to trim Iris leaves; however you can cut off brown tips to discourage rot. Remove spent flowers as ensuing seed development saps energy from the parent plant.

#### **Problem & Solution:**

Problems	Cause	Solution
'Leaf Spot' (Does not effect plant growth or bloom)	Fungal disease- soil too acidic.	Check soil pH and adjust with Lime to raise pH or Sulphur to lower pH
'Rhizome Rot' (Smells like rotten potato)	Over feeding- especially with animal manure or high nitrogen fertiliser. Poor drainage in wet and humid conditions.	Lift plant and cut back to flesh. Treat with Yates Anti-Rot.
Plant won't bloom	Planted too deep. Competition from weeds or insufficient sun exposure. Lack of Winter Chill. Excessive nitrogen in soil.	Lift and replant. Maintain surrounding area or relocate. Do not mulch.
Small Blooms or Short Growth	Clumps too congested	Lift, dig soil over, separate and plant a fresh.

## **Iris Anatomy:**

The Irises grown here at BEST Nursery are Rhizome Irises – Bearded varieties mostly tall or median growing between 35 and 90cm tall. There is comprehensive information available about these irises at <http://www.irises.org.au> – The Iris Society of Australia web site.



The distinctive flowers have three large outer petals called “falls” and three inner upright petals called “standards.” The falls may have beards or crests. Bearded Iris are so-called because they have soft hairs along the centre of the falls.

Most irises flower in early summer. Some, mostly bearded hybrids, are remontant, flowering again later in the summer.

If you have any questions about growing or caring for your Iris please give us a call at **BEST Nursery** or send an email and we will do our best to help. **P: 02 6722 4200 E: [sales@bestnursery.com.au](mailto:sales@bestnursery.com.au)**