



# STEM TYPE CONDITIONING GUIDE

Conditioning flowers involves the preparation of cut plant material prior to arranging to prolong **longevity** in displays and ensure they look their best!

Plant material should be conditioned according to the stem type: hollow, bulbous, woody or milky.

- Secateurs
- Scissors
- Buckets
- Flower Food
- Water source

## **Hollow stems**

Flower types include delphiniums, amaryllis, dahlia and mollucella

Cut the stems at an angle and remove the lower leaves. Turn the flower upside down and fill the hollow stem with water. To keep the liquid in, you can place your thumb over the opening at the bottom of the stem and place into the water or simply plug with a small piece of cotton. The water trapped inside will keep the stem strong and straight.

## **Bulbous stems**

Flower types include daffodil, hyacinths, tulips and iris

Most bulbous flowers are pulled, not cut, from the plant by growers. Cut where the green on the stem starts, just above the white bulb. Extremely soft stems such as hyacinths and daffodils are best cut horizontal. Place in cold water, unless the flowers are open. Warm water speeds up the development of bulbous flowers.

Note: Daffodils exude poisonous sap when cut. Avoid placing in vase with other flowers. They should always be conditioned separately.

## **Woody stems**

Flower types include lilacs, viburnum, hydrangea, mimosa

Cut the stems at an angle, slit up the stem ends by approx 2cm. Remove all the lower foliage below the water line, and place into water with flower food (optional). Do not crush the ends of stems.

## **Milky stems**

Flower types include euphorbia

The stems exude a milky substance called latex when cut. This can be a skin irritant. When cut, the stems need to be seared before adding to an arrangement. Dip in boiling water for 30 seconds or apply a flame to seal it.

For conditioning information on the basics & common problems, visit guides in the 'Resources.'