



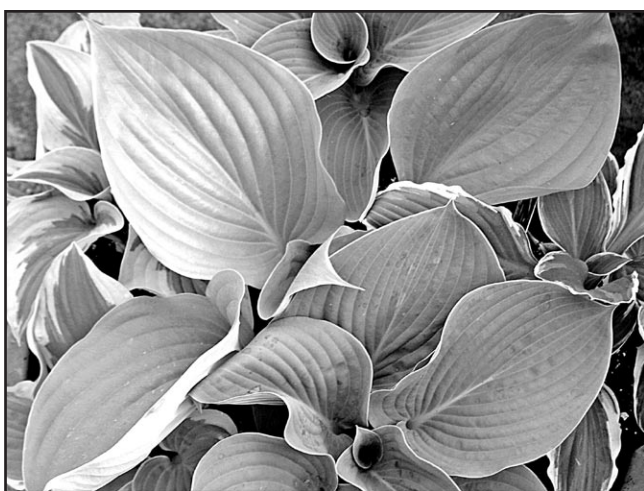
# Hostas – low maintenance plants that flourish here

Well you may know this plant by its common name – a Hosta. These luscious, leafy plants were originally from Japan, China and Korea but in the 1700s spread to Europe and in the 1800s across the ocean to the U.S. and Canada

Hostas are a hardy perennial in these parts and is widely known for its exotic leaves that come in all shapes, sizes, colours and textures. Its bold coloured leaves flourish in greens, golds, blues or come variegated. Although known for its leaves, Hostas also produce a small trumpet-like flower that blooms by late summer in whites to mauves and often are fragrant.

Another great feature of Hostas is the wide span of sizes they come in which gives them great versatility. Small Hostas can be under 4-inches high, whereas larger varieties can reach heights of 4 to 5 ft.

Generally all Hostas are a partial to full shade plant. However, depending on the colour of Hosta you choose, it will predict exactly how much shade is needed for the plant to do its best. Gold and green Hostas tend to like partial shade with morning sun. Blues on the other hand are strictly shade. But no matter what the colour you're dealing with, too much sun or intense heat and not enough water can bleach the colour



of your Hosta to the point of scorching it.

Remember, when planting your Hosta, that it likes a rich, organic soil – so if you're stuck with a loamy soil in your garden adding manure or compost will help fix the problem. Also know that Hostas need their space – each year they get bigger and with that a more intense colour in the leaves until they reach maturity in 4-8 years.

When starting out this gardening season – consider a Hosta. It's an easy, low maintenance plant that provides large, lavish backgrounds behind your colourful annuals or a small delightfully, dainty border plant. It also does great in containers which allows you to winter it inside. Even though you will usually pay more for this perennial, it's well worth the price to have this luscious, leafy beauty.

# Check that barbecue before lighting it...

The warmer weather is here and barbecues are already being lit. Before striking up the grill though, staff of the Halton Hills Fire Protection & Prevention Services want residents to follow some recommended safety tips.

1. Closely inspect and clean your propane or natural gas barbecue. Clean all the burner gas ports of dirt, rust and cobwebs with a pipe cleaner or small piece of wire.
2. Check the gas supply hose from the cylinder to the regulator for any cracks, wear and tear.
3. Check all hose connections for leaks using a 50% soap/water solution and watch for any bubbles.
4. Never use an open flame to check for leaks. This is an invitation for disaster.
5. When ready to light the burners, always do so with the lid up.
6. If the barbecue fails to light immediately, turn the gas control knob "off" for a minute or two before trying again.

7. If you have any doubts about the condition of any part of your appliance, replace the part with a new one.

8. When the meal is cooked, turn the gas supply valve off first to allow the gas in the hose to burn off then, turn off the burner control.

9. Keep children away from the hot barbecue at all times.

Questions? Visit Halton Hills Fire Protection &

Prevention Services Information Centre at Georgetown Marketplace for more information regarding propane or natural gas barbecues. Revised hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11am and 1pm.



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