



Landscaper's Guide to SunPatiens®

Key Elements for success with SunPatiens in the landscape

Why SunPatiens?

The truly unique genetic background of SunPatiens delivers unsurpassed garden performance like no other flowering annual. What makes them so special?

- ✓ Strong roots that take hold quickly and are resistant to soil pests
- ✓ Plants that thrive under high heat, rain and humidity
- ✓ Full-sun to shade versatility
- ✓ Continuous, non-stop blooming from Spring through Fall
- ✓ Carefree, low-maintenance plants (Low fertilizer requirements, self-cleaning)
- ✓ Strong insect and disease resistance (not impacted by Downy Mildew)

Acclimatization:

SunPatiens tolerate cooler temps better than traditional New Guinea Impatiens, but cooler night temperatures (less than 55°F/13°C) can severely restrict growth. When planting in early spring, care should be taken to acclimate the plants for cooler night temperatures to avoid cold damage, (characterized by bronzing foliage). In addition, plants should be exposed to 5,000+ foot candles at least one week prior to planting outdoors to condition the plants for higher outdoor light levels.

Getting Started / Soil Preparation

The first key to success with SunPatiens is providing a healthy foundation. Coarse-textured soils (sandy) have good drainage and plenty of oxygen for root development but retain little water. The opposite is true for fine-textured soils (clay) where drainage and aeration are poor, but water is easily retained. Heavy soils may also increase the susceptibility to many soil borne diseases such as *Rhizoctonia*. Whether the soil bed is coarse or fine textured, SunPatiens will benefit from the addition of organic matter. Consider supplementing the bed with rice hulls, peat moss, pine bark, compost or other organics to improve the balance of oxygen-to-water availability. The percentage of organic matter depends on soil type and local climate, but target a range of 10-20%.

After the addition of organic matter, test the soil to determine nutrient levels and whether pH falls between the recommended levels of 5.8 to 7.0. Soil pH is critical to the uptake of nutrients so adjust accordingly if needed. Prepare beds by removing weeds and applying pre-emergent herbicide if desired. Beds should be tilled to at least 6" to 8" create a uniform soil texture. If possible, crown the bed to eliminate low areas and promote good drainage. Heavy, poorly drained soils are to be avoided.

Fertilizer Program

SunPatiens are very light feeders and excessive fertilizer may result in reduced flowering and weak stems. If applying liquid fertilizers, use a nitrate based fertilizer at 75 to 100 ppm once every 3 to 4 weeks. Another option is to apply a



well-balanced slow release fertilizer at ½ the typical rate. This works best when the granules are incorporated into the soil; especially on sloped areas where heavy rains are frequent.

Irrigation Program

SunPatiens are vigorous plants with strong root systems. Maintaining adequate soil moisture during the first 2-weeks after transplanting is critical to get roots established and provide the substance to withstand climatic stress. Drip irrigation is highly recommended to provide more frequent watering (2-3 times daily) in the early stages and for more efficient delivery after the plant canopy is established. Once established, adjust irrigation schedule as temperature and light exposure dictate. SunPatiens are very tolerant to wilting and are quick to recover without the loss of flowers or buds should irrigation timing prove inadequate.



Mulching can assist with water retention and to prevent weeds from establishing as well. Similar to other bedding plants, SunPatiens are sensitive to compacted soil from foot traffic. A light mulch can help maintain soil aeration if workers need to access beds for periodic maintenance. When applying mulch be sure to leave a few inches of clearance around the plant base to prevent stem rot.

Light Exposure

As their name suggests, SunPatiens perform extremely well under high light, full-sun conditions. They also continue to flower under shaded settings providing strong flexibility with your design and layout options. Filtered light (65%+) or limited sun exposure (4-hours of direct light) will not reduce the flowering ability of SunPatiens. The variegated leaf varieties of SunPatiens also perform well in shade.

Spacing

Given their aggressive growth, SunPatiens cover more ground per plant which allows for greater spacing. Fewer plants are needed to cover the same area as traditional bedding plants. Plant spacing depends on container size, time desired for fill-in, and variety selection. Consider the following guide:

SunPatiens	Colors	Avg Height	Avg Width	Comments	Spacing*
Compact Series	10	14" to 24"	14" to 24"	Ideal for warmer climates, longer growing seasons	12" to 16"
Spreading Series	8	20" to 36"	24" to 36"	Wider plants fill-in canopy quickly	14" to 18"
Vigorous Series	4	24" to 42"	24" to 30"	Ideal for cooler climates and mass plantings	14" to 20"

*Night temperatures greatly influence how quickly SunPatiens grow and fill-in; night temps < 58°F slows growth

Plant Spacing >	8" x 8"	10" x 10"	12" x 12"	14" x 14"	16" x 16"	18" x 18"	20" x 20"
Plants/1,000 sqft >	2,250	1,440	1,000	735	563	444	360

Plant maintenance

Once established, SunPatiens are virtually maintenance free. SunPatiens are highly resistant to disease (including Downy Mildew) and many insects. However, soil borne diseases, such as *Rhizoctonia* and *Phytophthora*, may result from poorly drained, heavy and compacted soils (see soil prep above). SunPatiens will continue to flower until heavy frost. One installation will last from spring to fall without the need to replant.

Additional information regarding SunPatiens culture is available on-line at the following websites:

www.sunpatiens.com and www.sakataornamentals.com