

Care Instructions

Perennial Mixed Plantings

General information

A perennial mixed planting needs about three growing seasons to become fully established on site. During this time, the plants adapt to the particular conditions of their location, and the ground-covering species help to form a closed plant cover. Once this establishment phase is over, only a few maintenance visits are required each year. A key prerequisite for this low level of maintenance is the mineral mulch we recommend, a layer of gravel or chippings 3 to 5 cm thick with a grading of 8/11 or 8/16 mm. This layer effectively reduces weed growth.

Every site affects the maintenance needs of a planting differently. Over time, you will build up a great deal of experience of your own. What matters is observing how the planting develops from one growing season to the next rather than from week to week.

Planting dynamics

Perennial mixtures gain their stability from a balanced and broad range of species, from short-lived plants to more robust species with a longer development period. Give the plants room to grow, and intervene carefully by cutting back only where a species develops too vigorously. Gaps caused by plant losses are usually filled quickly by neighbouring species.

Depending on site and soil, individual species may develop more strongly than others. Some grasses may also spread by self-seeding where conditions are particularly favourable. Limiting this spread through targeted cutting and keeping neighbouring perennials free from encroachment is an important maintenance task, especially in the second and third growing seasons.

Over the following growing seasons, you will see which plants cope best with the site and hold their own against other species.

Maintenance visits

Please do not hoe or loosen the soil, as this impairs the development of the plants. Pull out or dig out any weeds that appear. Beyond that, maintenance visits should be carried out as needed, depending on plant growth, usually around five a year. Longer periods of warm, humid weather, for example, can lead to increased germination and growth of garden weeds.

Pruning

Throughout the year, faded seed heads can be cut back as required. Leave sturdy parts of grasses and perennials standing over winter, as they provide winter interest and shelter for beneficial insects. Cut the planting back before new growth begins in spring, in early March when the first crocus tips appear. On large areas, a lawn mower set to a high cutting height or a sickle bar mower can also be used.

Autumn leaf removal

Accumulations of autumn leaves may need to be removed from the area up to twice a season. During the first maintenance visit of the year, also clear the area of other plant material such as wind-blown leaves. In the shade and partial shade mixtures, a thin layer of leaves is desirable because it helps to build humus.

Watering

After a two-year establishment phase, watering is largely unnecessary. During longer periods of drought, water the planting in the evening with about 20 l/m².

Fertilising

Most perennial mixtures should deliberately be left unfertilised, as the perennials used require distinctly lean soil. Border-style mixtures and mixtures for home gardens should be fertilised organically according to soil conditions.

