



ask

Celebrating 21 Years! the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Email or mail your questions to: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or
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Thank you Readers for Voting Sprigs & Twigs
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Question this Week: I recently discovered bulbs that I meant to plant in the ground last fall, but I never got around to it. Can I plant them in the spring?...Denise

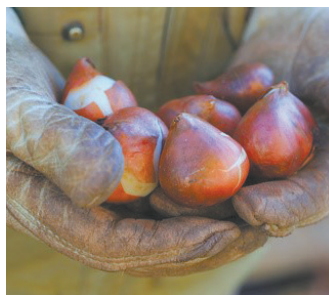
Linda's Answer:

Hello Denise- That is a good question. Bulbs require long, cold periods before flowering in the spring, so if you wait until spring to plant them, you'll need to follow my tip (see #3 below), or most probably they will not flower. You do have several other options that will work now, depending on how frozen the ground is when you get ready to plant.

1) If the ground has not frozen or is just frozen on the surface, go ahead and plant the bulbs in the ground. Dig a hole so the bulbs can be planted several inches deep, with the pointy end up. Even if the ground is snow-covered, it may not be frozen deeply, so scrape off the snow and give it a try.

2) If the ground is frozen like a rock, you can get a bag or two of soil from a garden center and spread it over the bulbs so that they are several inches below the surface and they will be fine. Of course, you could use this approach even if the soil isn't frozen.

3) To give bulbs their necessary period of cold prior to planting, you can store them loosely and dry (not planted) in a box in the refrigerator. Do not put them in a plastic bag or wrap them in plastic, because you don't want any condensation. The refrigerator will keep them at a steady 38 degrees F. If you don't have a refrigerator available, you could keep them in a cold garage or out-building, but you want them to be at a temperature between 35 and 45 degrees all winter. As soon as the bulb begins to sprout and the ground is thawed but still cold, plant them outside as you would normally. With a little luck, they will bloom just fine and return again each year.



Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 21 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects..

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