



# The Proven Winners® Hydrangea guide

**FIND YOUR PERFECT HYDRANGEA!**



# Simply the best!

There are so many Hydrangeas on the market, that you may be lost for choice. This booklet will help you to choose the right Hydrangeas for your garden, but first some background.

## 🌿 WHO ARE PROVEN WINNERS®?

We are a European network of enthusiastic plant growers! Our passion is to innovate and we are proud of bringing you new plant varieties. Breeding is either done by ourselves or by working together with our worldwide network of breeding specialists. Our mission is to provide the healthiest and strongest plants on the market so that everyone, even beginners, can enjoy a rewarding gardening experience.

## 🌿 WHAT ARE PROVEN WINNERS® PLANTS?

Proven Winners® are a range of garden plants. They can be annuals, perennials or shrubs. Our criteria are that all plants should be easy to grow and maintain, offer something unique or different and that we can make them readily available across Europe. Very few plants are as thoroughly tested as Proven Winners®. All introductions are subject to a rigorous trial process which may take as long as five years. For the PW shrub range we test in Finland, the Netherlands, Michigan (USA) and Switzerland.

## 🌿 HOW TO RECOGNIZE PROVEN WINNERS® HYDRANGEAS?

All our Hydrangeas are supplied with the bespoke white container with the PW logo. The tag or label comes in the form of a diamond shaped booklet with pictures and information about the plant.

## 🌿 LESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT WITH PROVEN WINNERS® PLANTS

Proven Winners® breeds strong and vigorous varieties, with a particular focus on pests and disease resistance. As a result, PW varieties require smaller amounts of insecticides and fungicides, if any. The selection process also looks at a higher heat and drought tolerance, so that PW plants perform well in a range of different climates and environments.

The containers we use for shrubs are all 100% recyclable and approximately 90% of the containers sold are made of 100% post-consumer recycled plastic. As of 2024 our labels are made of plastic with a recycled content of at least 30%. We are committed to continue reducing the environmental impact of our packaging and production process.

**TRY A PROVEN WINNERS® HYDRANGAEA, YOU WILL LOVE IT!**

# 01

**Hydrangea arborescens**, is one of the most winter hardy Hydrangea type but also the one that can withstand warmer climates. Often they are planted as flowering hedges. Most of the varieties used to have white flowers but breeding by Proven Winners® has led to varieties with other flower colours.

# 02

**Cascade Hydrangea®**, brand new and very innovative Hydrangea varieties with weeping branches that have numerous flowers on each branch. Cascade hydrangeas flower already in mid spring: earlier than other hydrangea varieties.

# 03

Panicle hydrangea (**Hydrangea paniculata**) have large, cone-shaped flowers. They start flowering in a white or light green colour but will transition spectacularly, to shades ranging from green and pink to hot red, depending on the variety. The strong stems of paniculata types become 'woody', allowing the shrub to reach a bigger height than most other types.

# 04

**Hydrangea macrophylla** is the most common type of Hydrangea and are often called hortensia. The macrophylla varieties can be divided between so called mophead types, with flowers shaped like big balls, and lace-cap types, with plate or saucer shaped flowers.

# 05

Mountain hydrangea (**Hydrangea serrata**) originate from Japan and Korea, which also have lace-cap flowers but are in general better able to withstand cold winters. Serrata types will display a nice autumn leaf colour.

# 06

Oakleaf hydrangea or **Hydrangea quercifolia** are easily distinguished by their different leafshape. Oakleaves flower best in areas with hot summers. Its flowers bloom white, green or pink. In autumn they will provide you with a wonderful show of orange to burgundy leaf colours.

Which one to choose?

There are over 20 Hydrangeas types or species of which five are most frequently used, and very suitable, for gardening.

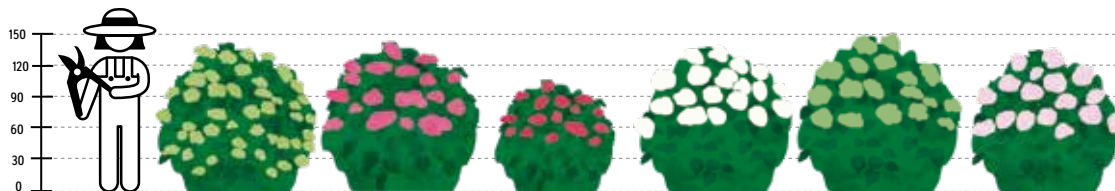


# Arborescens

Proven Winners® arborescens varieties grow on all types of soil and are frost resistant to -30°C. Flowering starts in early summer and lasts till early autumn. Flowers of all Proven Winners® arborescens varieties are supported by strong branches. Decades of research have resulted in the widest range of choices for you. You will find that our selection covers the most colours and sizes available in the market. On this page you will find the larger sized varieties, on the next page the small-sized varieties.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Normal arborescens struggle in rain and/or wind, with their heavy flowers quickly falling to the ground. PW breeders were the first to solve this problem, by achieving much stronger flower stems.



	Lime Rickey®	Pink Annabelle®	Ruby Annabelle®	Strong Annabelle®	Sublime Annabelle®	Sweet Annabelle®
COLOUR	lime green	pink	ruby red	pure white	lime green	silvery pink
COLOUR EVOLUTION				to jade green	to deep lime green	to light green
FLOWERING	summer - early autumn	summer - early autumn	summer	summer - early autumn	summer - late autumn	summer - early autumn
HEIGHT FROM/TO	120/150	120/150	90/120	120/150	140/160	120/150
SPREAD FROM/TO	90/120	90/120	60/90	90/120	90/120	90/120
HABIT	bushy	bushy	bushy	bushy	bushy	bushy
MAIN FEATURE	lime green flowers bottom to top	unique pink colour	deep red flower colour	the original with strong branches	heat resistant flowers	huge silvery pink flowers
OTHER FEATURE	abundant flowering	continuous flowering	long flowering	long flowering	perfect as cut flower	long flowering
AWARD		silver	gold	bronze		bronze

**FLOWERS ON NEW WOOD**  
**PRUNING PERIOD: EARLY SPRING**

**PH ACID/NEUTRAL/ALKALINE**  
**FLOWER SHAPE: BALL**





**SUBLIME ANNABELLE®**



**RUBY ANNABELLE®**



**LIME RICKEY®**

Hydrangea's are wonderful garden plants but some Hydrangea varieties have an added benefit: they can also be used as a cut flower. Within the Proven Winners® range several of the arborescens and paniculata varieties are suitable for this. Especially Sublime Annabelle® with its big flowers that age to a deep lime green colour will look sublime in your flower bouquet!



**PINK ANNABELLE®**



**STRONG ANNABELLE®**

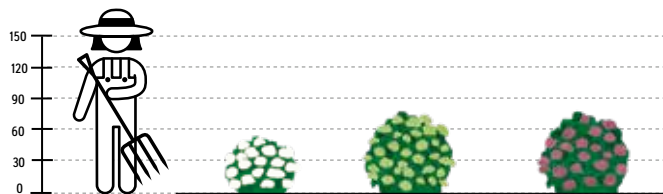


**SWEET ANNABELLE®**

Uniquely strong branches

# Arborescens

Within the Proven Winners® arborescens range, the BellaRagazza® form a special series. These are the first low-growing 'Annabelle' type hydrangea in the world, reaching only 40-90 cm high and therefore also suitable for in a pot on the terrace. Just like roses, you may want to 'dead head' faded flowers of Hydrangea arborescens. We have noticed that particularly BellaRagazza® Limetta responds very well to this by re-flowering abundantly.



	BellaRagazza® Blanchetta	BellaRagazza® Limetta	BellaRagazza® Mauvette
<b>COLOUR</b>	white	lime green	deep pink-purple
<b>COLOUR EVOLUTION</b>	starts pale pink	to white green	to light green
<b>FLOWERING</b>	summer	summer - early autumn	summer - early autumn
<b>HEIGHT FROM / TO</b>	40/60	60/90	60/90
<b>SPREAD FROM / TO</b>	60/90	60/90	60/90
<b>HABIT</b>	compact	compact	compact
<b>MAIN FEATURE</b>	super small habit	small habit and green flowers	small habit very strong branches
<b>OTHER FEATURE</b>	long flowering	continuous flowering	long flowering
<b>AWARD</b>		gold	



**BELLARAGAZZA® LIMETTA**



**BELLARAGAZZA® BLANCHETTA**



**BELLARAGAZZA® MAUVETTE**

**FLOWERS ON NEW WOOD**

**PH ACID / NEUTRAL / ALKALINE**

**PRUNING PERIOD: EARLY SPRING**

**FLOWER SHAPE: BALL**



-30°C

# Cascade Hydrangea®

We are excited to introduce the Fairytrail® series of Cascade Hydrangeas® developed by Ushio Sakazaki the legendary Hydrangea breeder from Japan. A series of Hydrangea's that has a graceful habit of arching, cascading branches with numerous flowers on every branch. A new class of Hydrangea with unrivalled flower power that are a beautiful choice for decorative containers and even hanging baskets but can also be used in gardens.

**NEW!**

## DID YOU KNOW?

It is best to let cascading hydrangeas grow unhindered (remove dead wood only), this will result in the most abundant flowering.



	Fairytrail® White	Fairytrail® Green
<b>COLOUR</b>	white	lime green
<b>FLOWERING</b>	mid spring - summer	mid spring - summer
<b>HEIGHT FROM / TO</b>	80/100	80/100
<b>SPREAD FROM / TO</b>	90/120	90/120
<b>HABIT</b>	cascading	cascading
<b>MAIN FEATURE</b>	cascading habit	cascading habit
<b>OTHER FEATURE</b>	flowers all along the branch	flowers all along the branch



FAIRYTRAIL® GREEN



FAIRYTRAIL® WHITE

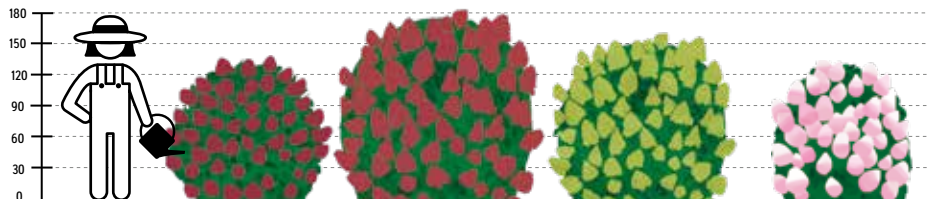


**FLOWERS ON NEW AND OLD WOOD**  
**PRUNING PERIOD: NO PRUNING**  
**(REMOVE DEAD WOOD ONLY)**

**PH NEUTRAL / ALKALINE**  
**FLOWER SHAPE: MOPHEAD**

# Paniculata

Proven Winners® paniculata are one of the easiest to grow in any garden and will make you look like a horticultural hero! The Proven Winners® selection is exceptionally floriferous and they all undergo a natural colour change, transforming them from white or green to pink and red tones as the flower ages. Unlike macrophylla and serrata types this happens independent of the soil chemistry (pH).



	Fire Light	Quick Fire Fab®	Lime Light Prime®	Pinkachu®
<b>COLOUR</b>	white	white	light green	creamy white
<b>COLOUR EVOLUTION</b>	to fiery pink-red	to blush pink, bright pink, red	to pink/red	to hot pink
<b>FLOWERING</b>	early summer - early autumn	late spring - summer	early summer - early autumn	early summer - early autumn
<b>HEIGHT FROM/ TO</b>	120/150	150/200	120/180	120/150
<b>SPREAD FROM/ TO</b>	90/120	150/200	120/150	90/120
<b>HABIT</b>	bushy	upright	upright	bushy
<b>MAIN FEATURE</b>	intense red	early and long flowering	tall and bushy	strong stems carrying big flowers
<b>OTHER FEATURE</b>	regular flower setting	unique x-shaped florets	long and bright flowering	abundant flowering
<b>AWARD</b>				silver

**FLOWERS ON NEW WOOD**

**PRUNING PERIOD: EARLY SPRING**

**pH ACID/ NEUTRAL/ ALKALINE**

**FLOWER SHAPE: CONICAL**



-30°C

## DID YOU KNOW?

Hydrangea paniculata is the only hydrangea variety that you can prune into a tree form.

In the Proven Winners® range you are sure to find your ideal panicle Hydrangea for your garden or terrace. On this page you find the details of the bigger paniculata varieties. On page 9 we show an example of the flower colour evolution of Fire Light. It starts white for the first couple of weeks. Over time it will pass to soft pink, then turn to deep pink to finish fiery red. A true show! Note that the timing of this colour evolution process is dependent on the weather conditions.



# Colour evolution of Fire Light



LIME LIGHT PRIME®



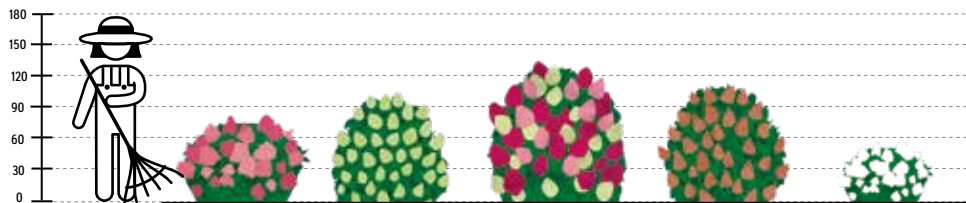
QUICK FIRE FAB®



PINKACHU®

# Paniculata

If you think you don't have enough space for a beautiful panicle Hydrangea, our small-sized varieties are here to help! For example, the innovative Tiny Quick Fire® is our smallest and most versatile selection yet. Perfect for the front of the border, for mass planting in rows or also suitable in a pot on the terrace.



	Fire Light Tiny Bit®	Little Lime®	Little Lime® Punch	Little Quick Fire®	Tiny Quick Fire®
<b>COLOUR</b>	white	lime green	white and green	white	white
<b>COLOUR EVOLUTION</b>	to pink red	to pink	to pink, white, red, green	to pink red	to pink red
<b>FLOWERING</b>	early summer - late summer	early summer - early autumn	early summer - early autumn	late spring - summer	late spring - summer
<b>HEIGHT FROM / TO</b>	60/90	90/120	90/150	90/120	40/60
<b>SPREAD FROM / TO</b>	60/90	90/120	90/150	60/90	40/60
<b>HABIT</b>	mounded	compact bushy	mounded	compact bushy	compact bushy
<b>MAIN FEATURE</b>	one of the smallest panicle Hydrangea	bestseller	festive mix	very early flowering	smaller than Fire Light Tiny Bit®
<b>OTHER FEATURE</b>	long flowering	abundant flowering	long flowering	compact habit	early flowering
<b>AWARD</b>		gold			

Like our bigger-sized varieties the flowers of our small-sized varieties also undergo a beautiful colour evolution during their flowering period. Some of our panicle Hydrangea offer you something extra. The varieties Fire Light Tiny Bit®, Quick Fire Fab®, Little Lime Punch® and Little Quick Fire® continue their colour show in autumn with their wonderful autumn foliage colours.

**FLOWERS ON NEW WOOD**

**PRUNING PERIOD: EARLY SPRING**

**PH ACID/ NEUTRAL/ ALKALINE**

**FLOWER SHAPE: CONICAL**





**LITTLE QUICK FIRE®**



**TINY QUICK FIRE®**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
 Panicle Hydrangeas are tough and will, compared to other Hydrangea, support more difficult soils.



**FIRE LIGHT TINY BIT®**



**LITTLE LIME®**



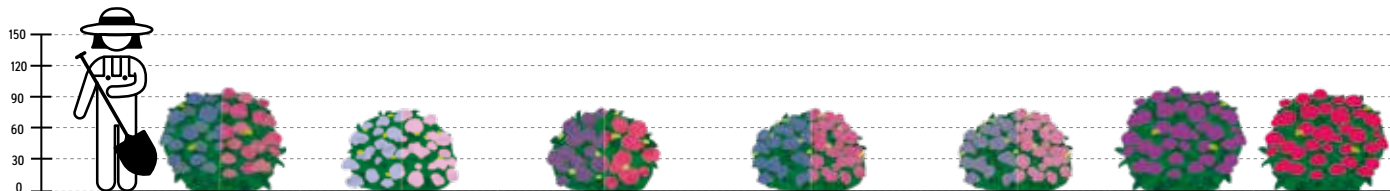
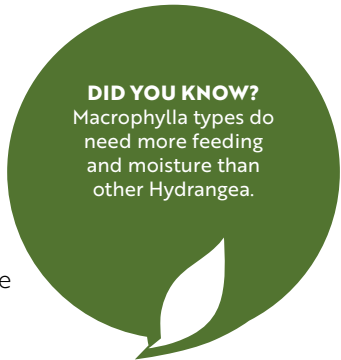
**LITTLE LIME® PUNCH**

*Colourful  
 conical  
 flowers*

# Macrophylla & Serrata

We have grouped the PW macrophylla and serrata under one brand name, the Flair & Flavours®. In the Flair & Flavours® group you find a full range of colours and different flower shapes.

Soil chemistry determines whether your macrophylla or serrata will flower blueish-purplish or pink-reddish. More neutral or alkaline soils, with a higher pH, make the flowers of your Hydrangea tend towards their natural colour of pink and white. In general, an acid soil (with lower pH) will make the flower more blueish-purplish. Did you know you can influence this? By adding a small gift of 'aluminium' powder in autumn. Such powder is available in better garden centres.



	F&F Sweet Marshmallow F&F Sweet Cupcake	F&F Blue Sprinkles F&F Pink Sweethearts	F&F Blackberry Pie F&F Strawberry n Cream	F&F Blueberry Cheesecake F&F Cotton Candy	F&F Frozen Smoothie	F&F Blackcurrant Muffin®	F&F Raspberry Lemonade
<b>COLOUR</b>	pop blue / pink	pale blue / soft pink	red-purple / strawberry red	purple-blue / sweet pink	lavender blue / pink	purple-blue	raspberry red
<b>FLOWERING</b>	late spring - late summer	late spring - late summer	late spring - late summer	late spring - late summer	early autumn	late spring - late summer	late spring - late summer
<b>HEIGHT FROM / TO</b>	80/100	60/90	60/90	60/90	60/90	80/100	80/100
<b>SPREAD FROM / TO</b>	90/120	60/90	60/90	60/90	60/90	90/120	90/120
<b>MAIN FEATURE</b>	abundant long flowering	waterlily shaped petals	reddish purple/ strawberry red flowers	flowers with a cute yellow centre	flowers along the entire stem	abundant long flowering	abundant long flowering
<b>OTHER FEATURE</b>	for terrasse and garden	abundant long flowering	abundant long flowering	abundant long flowering	abundant long flowering	for terrasse and garden	for terrasse and garden
<b>FLOWER SHAPE</b>	ball	lace-cap	lace-cap	lace-cap	lace-cap	ball	ball
<b>AWARD</b>				gold			

**FLOWERS ON NEW AND OLD WOOD**  
**PRUNING PERIOD: OLD FLOWERS IN SPRING**

**PH SEE ABOVE**  
**HABIT: COMPACT BUSHY**





**F&F STRAWBERRY'N CREAM**



**F&F BLUE SPRINKLES**



**F&F COTTON CANDY**



**F&F SWEET MARSHMALLOW**



**F&F BLACKCURRANT MUFFIN®**



**F&F PINK SWEETHEARTS**



**F&F BLUEBERRY CHEESECAKE**



**F&F FROZEN SMOOTHIE**

**F&F RASPBERRY LEMONADE**



# Quercifolia

Proven Winners® quercifolia are all sold under the Gatsby® series name. Whereas most other Hydrangea's leaf shape is rather 'ordinary' quercifolia really stands out in the crowd. Their leaves are deeply lobed, like most oak trees. Plant your quercifolia in moist but well drained soil, and give it some shelter in the first years so that it establishes quickly.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
 Quercifolia types start flowering white or green and change to red or pink as the season goes along. Gatsby® Pink is a fast mover, as it turns pink very quick, often within 10 days.



	Gatsby® Girl	Gatsby® Moon	Gatsby® Pink	Gatsby® Star
<b>COLOUR</b>	white	white	white	lime green
<b>COLOUR EVOLUTION</b>	to pink	to green	to pink	to pink
<b>FLOWERING</b>	mid summer - early autumn	mid summer - early autumn	mid summer - early autumn	mid summer - early autumn
<b>HEIGHT FROM/TO</b>	90/120	90/120	90/120	90/120
<b>SPREAD FROM/TO</b>	90/120	90/120	90/120	90/120
<b>HABIT</b>	bushy	bushy	bushy	bushy
<b>MAIN FEATURE</b>	huge flowers	double flowers	very fast colour change to pink	star shape petals
<b>OTHER FEATURE</b>	oak-shaped leaves	oak-shaped leaves	oak-shaped leaves	oak-shaped leaves

We already mentioned that serrata and certain paniculata Hydrangea have nice autumn colour but quercifolia puts on an even more spectacular show. The dark green foliage changes to various shades of bronze, orange and reddish purple.

**FLOWERS ON NEW WOOD**

**PRUNING PERIOD: OPTIONAL, IN SPRING**

**PH NEUTRAL/ALKALINE**

**FLOWER SHAPE: CONICAL**





**GATSBY® PINK**



**GATSBY® STAR**

Autumn  
colour  
interest



**GATSBY® MOON**



**GATSBY® GIRL**



# How to care for your Hydrangea?

## PLANTING

Most shrubs are best planted in autumn and Hydrangea are no exception. It allows your Hydrangea to establish itself and start growing 'aligned with the seasons'.

Early spring is a good alternative. As Hydrangea are not very demanding on soil type you will surely find a good spot in the garden. Most of them thrive in the full sun or half shade.

## WATERING

In general, Hydrangea with its shallow root system are notoriously water needy. Make sure that they are, and stay (!) moist by giving them regular and sufficient water. Watering is best done on the soil, particularly in sunny conditions. When the sun is out, wet flowers and foliage risk scorching. Also be careful, do not overwater as stagnant water might cause the roots to rot.

We already told you about the rigorous selection criteria of Proven Winners® Hydrangea, and those criteria include drought tolerance too. The Proven Winners® Hydrangea generally tolerate drier conditions.

In our European trials some among them stood out during heat and drought of the 2022 summer. Most notably:

- arborescens Pink Annabelle®, Lime Rickey®
- Flair & Flavours® varieties:
  - \* serrata Blueberry Cheesecake, Cotton Candy, Frozen Smoothie
  - \* macrophylla Raspberry Lemonade
- paniculata Lime Light Prime®, Little Lime® and Fire Light Tiny Bit®
- the quercifolia Gatsby® varieties

## PESTS AND DISEASES

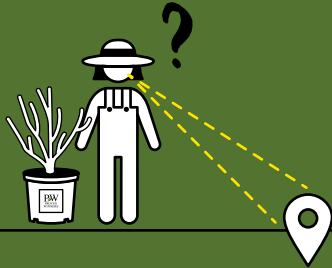
Hydrangea is probably one of the strongest genera around to grow in your garden. Healthy Hydrangea are rarely prone to diseases such as mildew and do not seem be favourites of harmful insects such as lice, trips, vine weevil and white fly. In case you do have problems with pests and diseases try pruning them back first before you use chemical treatment.

### DID YOU KNOW?

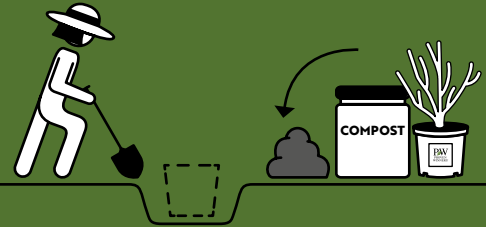
Adding two to three-inch layer of mulch is a useful to better regulate moisture for your Hydrangea.



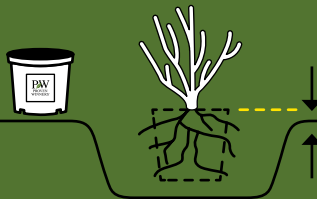
# Planting instructions



- 01.** Pick an area with full sun (or half shade) to plant your Hydrangea.
- 02.** Make sure that the soil of the plant is moist.



- 03.** Dig a hole with the same depth as the pot but about 2-3x as wide.
- 04.** Mix the soil of the hole with some fresh compost.
- 05.** Turn the soil at the bottom of the hole to aerate.



- 06.** Then carefully remove the pot and loosen up the root system somewhat.
- 07.** Position the plant in the middle of the hole with the top of the root ball just above the top level of the hole.



- 08.** Fill the hole with the mixed soil, press the soil around the plant firmly with your hands.
- 09.** Water the plant.
- 10.** Apply a 5-7cm layer of mulch, but do not bury the stems or trunk.

## PRUNING

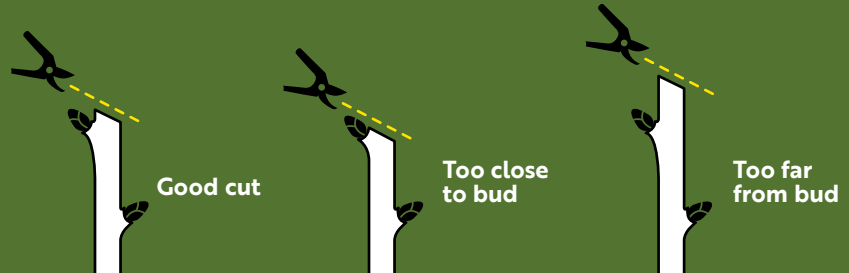
In general pruning helps plants to become more bushy and stay healthy. The best period to prune your Hydrangea is very late winter and early spring. Before you start, check that the plants are (still) dormant, so without leaves and developing leafbuds. Always use clean scissors which reduces the risk of spreading disease. When you prune, make your cut just above a set of large, healthy leafbuds. If a branch is broken or dead, it can be removed completely. If in doubt, don't prune! No hydrangea requires pruning to grow and flower well. For arborescens, macrophylla and serrata we can recommend to deadhead (remove spent flowers), this will increase the chance of reblooming.

### I am alive!

Proven Winners® plants are natural & living products. We try to inform you to the best of our knowledge but do note that flowering period, flower colour and plant size are dependent on where you live, the type of soil and the weather conditions in a particular year.

Do note that between the 6 Hydrangea species or types described in this booklet there are some differences:

- 01.** Arborescens types naturally make groundshoots and the older branches are best pruned back to half or a third of the original stems. In case of the shorter BellaRagazza® arborescens try to leave at least 15-20cm of old wood.
- 02.** It is best to let cascading hydrangeas grow unhindered (remove dead wood only), this will result in the most abundant flowering.
- 03.** Paniculata types respond well to strong pruning by becoming more compact, if you prune them lightly they will gain height.
- 04.** Macrophylla and serrata make most of their flowerbuds on last year's wood, so if you prune in spring you will get less flowers in summer. In spring simply tidy them up by taking off the old flowers. If you want the macrophylla and serrata to flower abundantly do not prune them too often, once every 3-5 years is enough.
- 05.** Quercifolia support pruning down to half of the original stems but do not need a lot of it. After the plant has established itself it is really up to you.





## FIND US





You can find your Proven Winners® Hydrangeas at better garden centres across Europe. Always look for the recognisable white container and the diamond-shaped label.

## WEBSITE

Visit our website [www.provenwinners.eu](http://www.provenwinners.eu) to find a retailer nearby and to discover our broad range of Proven Winners® plants. Besides our wonderful Hydrangea collection, we offer many other unique and innovative varieties.

## WEBSHOP

You can order Proven Winners® shrubs online through our webshop: [www.provenwinnersplants.com](http://www.provenwinnersplants.com). The webshop is currently active in 4 countries Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Other countries will be added but please feel free to contact us in case you live outside these countries in the meantime.

-  [provenwinners\\_en](#)      [provenwinners\\_europe](#)
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Hydrangea arborescens Strong Annabelle® ('Abetwo')

*A better garden starts  
with a better plant*

