



Fragrant plants bring you another level of pleasure from your garden, while also attracting pollinators that are drawn by the many types of scents they emit. A wide variety of common plants have appealing scents, including annual and perennial flowers, trees and shrubs, and herbs. That means it's easy to find spots to tuck one or many into your garden or a few into containers. Whichever you choose, try to place them near walkways where you may brush by them and release their scents or near windows where a breeze can bring their fragrance into your home.

Annuals and Perennials

Four O' Clocks (*Mirabilis jalapa*)

These tender perennials (grown as an annuals in the mid-Atlantic region) are called four o'clocks because their sweet-scented flowers open in late afternoon and close again when the sun rises the next morning. The trumpet-shaped blooms may be red, pink, white, or yellow, striped or mottled.

Blooms: Early summer to fall.

Pinks (*Dianthus*)

Members of the carnation family, pinks are hardy perennials that bloom in many shades, from fuchsia to coral to red, some with white highlights. The "Scent First" varieties have been selected for their strong, spicy fragrance.

Blooms: Midspring into early summer

Flowering Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*)

The alternate name of Jasmine Tobacco gives you hint of the fragrances of these annuals, which open their flowers in the late afternoon and evening. The star-shaped flowers may be pink, white, or even pale green.

Blooms: Summer into fall

Heliotrope (*Heliotropium arborescens*)

Another tender perennial grown as an annual in northern climates, heliotrope bears dense clusters of deep purple, lavender, or white flowers. "Cherry pie plant" is one of its common names because its fragrance reminds many people of vanilla with cherry undertones.

Blooms: Early summer to fall

Lilies (*Lilium*)

The large lily family includes many fragrant varieties, most notably the mid-season Oriental and trumpet types. Their big blossoms have deep throats and thick, smooth petals, in a wide range of colors. 'Stargazer' is a popular variety with fuchsia and white flowers, and a sweet floral aroma.

Blooms: Summer

Moonflower (*Ipomoea alba*)

A relative of morning glories, moonflower has white, sweet-scented blooms that open around sunset and close in the morning. The fragrance is attractive to many types of pollinators, particularly moths.

Blooms: Summer into fall

Stock (*Matthiola incana*)

These biennials (*plants that take two years to set seed and die*) bear dense clusters of white, yellow, red, pink, or blue flowers that have a distinctive clove-like aroma. Often used in cut flower bouquets, stock can be dried and preserved, too.

Blooms: Summer into fall

Shrubs and Trees

Abelia (*Abelia chinensis*)

A shrub in the honeysuckle family, abelia has red stems, glossy leaves, and the scent reminiscent of jasmine. The pinkish white blossoms open late in the season, when few other shrubs are in bloom.

Blooms: Late summer to early autumn





Shrubs and Trees cont.

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Buttonbush, native to mid-Atlantic woodlands, bears hundreds of white and spiky flower globes with a honey-tinged scent. After the flowers fade, the red fruit attracts songbirds.

Blooms: Early to midsummer

Sweet Crabapple (*Malus coronaria*)

Many varieties of specialized (non-swarming) bees are attracted by the lightly sweet fragrance of the pink flowers. The fruit the pollinators help to produce can be used for jams or blended into cider.

Blooms: Spring

Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)

The long, purple or pink flower clusters seem to bloom on those first warm days of the season when the windows are all open and the strong lilac perfume wafts in. Dwarf varieties grow only 3 feet tall, so they're a good choice for small spaces.

Blooms: Spring. New reblooming varieties come back once or more during the growing season.

Roses (*Rosa*)

Many (*but not all*) of the thousands of varieties of roses are fragrant. Heirloom types, such as Damask, and the David Austin roses have been selected for their iconic scents.

Blooms: Late spring to early summer. Reblooming varieties come back later in the growing season.

Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*)

Also called sweetpepper bush, this native shrub bears long spikes of pale yellow to white flowers that have a sweet-yet-spicy scent. In the woodlands, it's an understory plant, so it fares well in partial shade.

Blooms: Summer

Herbs

Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*)

The purple flower spikes attract many types of bees and the licorice-scented leaves will catch the attention of your nose. Anise hyssop is a short-lived perennial, meaning it will come back for a few years after you plant it.

Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)

Anyone who cooks with basil knows how fragrant it is. You can find varieties, such as 'Spicy Globe', 'Cinnamon', and 'Lemon', that have been selected for their specific scents.

Lavender (*Lavandula*)

In aromatherapy, lavender is recommended when you need to destress and sleep—just lightly running your fingers along the gray-to-green foliage releases the soothing scent. English lavender tends to have a stronger aroma than the French varieties.

Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)

You catch a whiff of fresh lemon when you brush or crush the leaves of this herb. It is a vigorous member of the fast-spreading mint family, so keep it in a container.

Thyme (*Thymus spp.*)

Plant creeping thyme in pathways or shady parts of your lawn. When you walk on it (*after it's established*), you'll notice the earthy, minty aroma wafting up.

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