Lavandula angustifolia Lavender, English Lavender

Edward F. Gilman

Introduction
Lavender produces gray foliage and purple flowers, although cultivars with pink, blue, lavender, or white flowers also exist. Most plants are 2 to 3 feet tall but some cultivars are shorter and more compact. Soft leaves are borne on erect, square, tomentose stems. The plant is a perennial in the northern part of its range but may decline in zone 8 due to the summer heat.

General Information
Scientific name: *Lavandula angustifolia*

Pronunciation: luh-VAN-dyoo-luh an-gus-tif-FOLE-ee-uh

Common name(s): lavender, English lavender

Family: Labiatae

Plant type: herbaceous; perennial

USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 8 (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: cut flowers; ground cover; mass planting; attracts butterflies

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description
Height: 1 to 3 feet

Spread: 2 to 3 feet

Plant habit: spreading

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: whorled

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: oblong

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: blue or blue-green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy


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**Flower**
- **Flower color:** purple
- **Flower characteristic:** pleasant fragrance; summer flowering

**Fruit**
- **Fruit shape:** unknown
- **Fruit length:** unknown
- **Fruit cover:** unknown
- **Fruit color:** unknown
- **Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**
- **Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable
- **Current year stem/twig color:** gray/silver
- **Current year stem/twig thickness:** thin

**Culture**
- **Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun
- **Soil tolerances:** acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay
- **Drought tolerance:** unknown
- **Soil salt tolerances:** unknown
- **Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

**Other**
- **Roots:** not applicable
- **Winter interest:** no special winter interest
- **Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
- **Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive
- **Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

**Use and Management**

The plants grow best in a sunny location in a dry, somewhat infertile soil. Protect the crowns with several inches of mulch during the winter. Plants are more susceptible to winter injury when grown in wet, heavy soil.

Lavenders are widely grown as ornamentals; they are tidy, low-maintenance plants that serve well as borders, knots, in rock gardens, and with roses. They are very sensitive to pH, which should be kept above 6. They can be pruned in early spring.

The oil of lavender is a mainstay in perfumery, and the fragrance is widely used in soaps and cosmetics. Flowers for drying must be harvested before opening. They can then be bound together into aromatic and decorative wands, or incorporated in potpourris or sachets.


**Pests and Diseases**

Leaves infected with leaf spot can be picked off.