

# *Hippeastrum x hybridum* Amaryllis<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The large, bold flowers of amaryllis are well known as potted plants, the tall flower scape projecting well above the long, evergreen, strap-like leaves. Borne in clusters of two to five, the trumpet-shaped blooms appear in spring when planted in the landscape and are available in various shades and combinations of white, pink, red, or orange. Amaryllis are semi-evergreen when grown in northern Florida since the foliage lays down and rots during the winter. They can be used in a mass planting spaced about 12 inches apart or scattered among small shrubs or groundcovers for a splash of delightful spring color.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Hippeastrum x hybridum*: Amaryllis  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Flower - *Hippeastrum x hybridum*: Amaryllis  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Hippeastrum x hybridum*

**Pronunciation:** hip-ee-ASS-strum HYE-brid-um

**Common name(s):** amaryllis

**Family:** *Amaryllidaceae*

**Plant type:** bulb/tuber; perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 8 through 10 (Figure 3)

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

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**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Uses:** mass planting; container or above-ground planter; border; naturalizing; edging

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant



Figure 3. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 1 to 2 feet

**Spread:** 1 to 2 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 18 to 36 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** orange; pink; red; white

**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** 0.5 to 1 inch

**Fruit cover:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** green

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; acidic; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 6 to 12 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

Amaryllis will grow in any well-drained soil, preferably in high, shifting shade. They grow well under the shade of trees provided they receive some direct light for a portion of the day. They flower poorly in total shade. The foliage will discolor when plants are grown in full sun, although they will flower better. They flower poorly in shade. While the normally tough leaves will be damaged by frost in zones 8, 9, and 10, they are quickly replaced in spring. The large bulbs are normally left in the ground, but some growers prefer to lift and separate new off shoot bulblets from the bulbs each fall, replanting at biweekly intervals from November to February to provide a succession of spring bloom. Bulbs should be planted only deep enough to cover the top of the bulbs. Plants should be fertilized lightly throughout the flowering period.

The vast number of available hybrids are too numerous to list. They have been selected for flower color, number and size, sturdiness of flower stalk (scape), and plant size.

Propagation of amaryllis is by seed or division. Plants will grow quickly and easily from seed, requiring three to several years before flowering.

## Pests and Diseases

Relatively pest-free, amaryllis is occasionally bothered by caterpillars and other chewing insects, neither requiring control in most instances. Soil nematodes can also slow growth.

Red blotch virus mosaic and botrytis are problem diseases.