

Earliest Spring Blooming Bulbs

Plant them in fall, and on a chilly day in spring, enjoy the show. Your neighbors will thank you.



Snowdrops don't care about the weather. These very early blooming bulbs, with pretty white flowers on delicate stems, push right up through the snow. If it's too cold to enjoy them for long in the garden, pick a few flowers for a little vase indoors. They'll warm you right up.

Crocus blossoms are one of the most cheering signs of spring. *Vanguard* and *Blue Pearl* snow crocus are especially early. *Giant Crocus Vernus* cultivars such as *Yellow Mammoth*, *Grand Maitre* and the striped *Pickwick* bloom a little later. Plant them by the dozens.



Elegant miniature *Iris reticulata* draw you out into the garden to appreciate their rich color. Intense, deep blue *Harmony* and pale blue *Cantab* both have a bright yellow spot. They grow only a few inches tall, so plant lots of them where you can't miss them as you come and go.

The first bright yellow daffodils welcome spring. Golden yellow *Peeping Tom* blooms ahead of the pack. *February Gold* is another fine early daffodil, with elegant, long-lasting flowers. The bold, ruffled yellow trumpets of *Dutch Master* are a longtime favorite.



Most tulips come into bloom after the daffodils are already well into their show, but there are some early exceptions, such as tulips in the *Fosteriana* and *Kaufmanniana* groups. For the first tulip blooms on the block, plant *Juan*, *Orange Emperor*, or bright pink *Humilis Helena*. Look for early tulips like yellow and red *Mickey Mouse* or the heirloom *Keizerskroon*. It's been around since 1750, and it's still a winner.

