

Handout/resources: Dividing Perennials

Good overview video about plant propagation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQ8kB8TWoF8>

Excellent resource-Propagation by stem cuttings <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/plant-propagation-by-stem-cuttings-instructions-for-the-home-gardener>

Excellent resource with photos: stem cuttings: <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/extpub/new-plants-from-cuttings-text-only/>

Short Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Oko9VqvZt4>

Plant Propagation by Leaf, Cane, and Root Cuttings <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/plant-propagation-by-leaf-cane-and-root-cuttings-instructions-for-the-home-gardener>

Plant propagation using cuttings

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2079/2014/02/PlantPropagationUsingCuttings.pdf>

Dividing Perennials—<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2017/06/C189-Dividing-Perennials-15a.pdf>

Propagating Perennials—<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2017/07/C101-Propagating-Perennials-15a.pdf>

OSU Dividing Plants—<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/divide-conquer-plants-keep-them-healthy-productive>

List of plants, when and how to divide:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Sv07afJ8jz9h_CGA_NNdjuFcaV83BUXtT2uIsYUsNdI/edit#gid=1250055917

Spreadsheet-How to Divide Specific Perennials—

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S6yqog4CnN_zqwG02uiOo28HT-is_LIP/view

Digging dividing and storing Dahlias <https://www.dahlia.org/docsinfo/articles/digging-dividing-and-storing-tubers/>

Dividing dahlias—video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Oko9VqvZt4>

Plant Propagation protocols for 5107 native plant species that, according to the USDA Plants database, occur in the Pacific Northwest <https://jbakker.shinyapps.io/Protocols/>

Plant propagation from seed <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2063/2016/03/Grow-from-Seeds.pdf>

Common name	Scientific name	How often to divide	When to divide	Notes
Allium, ornamental onion	<i>Allium</i> spp.	Annually; as needed	Fall	Divide overcrowded clusters after foliage disappears. Plant "new" bulbs in fall.
Anemone	<i>Anemone</i> spp.	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Does not re-establish well after being disturbed.
Artemisia	<i>Artemisia</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring	Regular division is important for health of plant and helps keep its invasive nature under control. Discard weak central crown.
Aster	<i>Aster</i> spp.	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Many cultivars require frequent division and replanting of small, healthy pieces from the outside of the clump.
Astilbe	<i>Astilbe x arendsii</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Needs division for best bloom. Cut plant into sections with sharp spade or knife.
Balloon flower	<i>Platycodon grandiflorus</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Does not like to be disturbed. Will not bloom for a year or two after division. Handle brittle root system carefully.
Barren strawberry	<i>Waldsteinia ternata</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or early fall	Divide when plant is not blooming.
Basket of gold	<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	Can be difficult to divide because plants clump
Beardtongue, smooth Penstemon	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring	Divide with spade or pitchfork.
Bee balm	<i>Monarda didyma</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring	Discard old central clump.
Bellflower	<i>Campanula</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring or late summer	Cut thick, fleshy rootstock apart with sharp knife.
Black eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring or fall	Divide using a spade or pitchfork. Will re-seed.

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Blanket flower, Gaillardia	<i>Gaillardia x grandiflorum</i>	3 to 5 years	Spring or fall	Divide by hand (vs. using a spade or pitchfork).
Bleeding heart	<i>Dicentra</i> spp.	6 to 10 years	Spring	Will seed. Cut crown apart with sharp knife. Roots are brittle, so handle carefully.
Boltonia	<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or early fall	
Brunnera, false forget-me-not	<i>Brunnera macrophylla</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring, late summer or fall	Cut rhizome with a sharp knife. Transplant divisions fairly deep into soil.
Bugleweed	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Can be divided any time of year, but spring and fall are best for quick rooting.
Burnet	<i>Sanguisorba obtusa</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or late summer	
Cardinal flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Discard old central, woody clump.
Catmint	<i>Nepeta</i> spp.	Annually; as needed	*Spring	Cut into sections with sharp knife or spade. Can also be divided in spring after primary bloom period if cut back and watered carefully.
Cinnamon fern	<i>Osmunda</i> spp.	Annually; as needed	Spring	
Clematis	<i>Clematis</i> spp.	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Division recommended for only selected species. Cut crown apart with sharp knife or spade.
Columbine	<i>Aquilegia</i> spp.	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or late summer	Does re-establish well after being disturbed. Dig deep to get all tapering, finger-like roots. Cut <i>young</i> plant apart with a sharp knife.
Coral bells	<i>Heuchera sanguinea</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Cut crown apart with sharp knife. Discard old, woody, central portion. Some plants can also be gently teased apart from each other.
Cornflower	<i>Centaurea montana</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	

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Cranesbill	<i>Geranium</i> spp.	6 to 10 years	Spring or early fall	Some varieties can be pulled apart by hand while others will need to be cut apart with a sharp knife.
Creeping lilyturf	<i>Liriope spicata</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	Divide to keep plant from becoming too aggressive.
Culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or late summer	
Cupid's dart	<i>Catanache caerulea</i>	1 to 3 years	Fall or spring	
Cushion spurge	<i>Euphorbia polychroma</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or fall	Discard central woody clump. Roots of some spurges are brittle, so handle carefully.
Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> spp.	3 to 5 years	Spring or immediately after flowering	Division promotes heavier bloom.
Delphinium	<i>Delphinium grandiflorum</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring	Note that plants dug in fall often die over winter. Regular division can prolong the life of this plant.
Dwarf hollyhock, false mallow	<i>Sidalcea</i> spp.	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	
Echinacea, purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or early fall	Can remain undisturbed for years. Divide every 4 to 5 years for plant's health. Cut crown apart with sharp knife. Will seed - transplants will likely bloom the second year.
False blue indigo	<i>Baptisia australis</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Difficult to re-establish. Dig deep to remove entire root system without breaking it. Cut crown apart with sharp knife or saw.
False lupine	<i>Thermopsis</i> spp.	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Does not re-establish easily after division. Only divide when plants are several years old.
False sunflower	<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	5 to 10 years	Spring or fall	Cut crown apart with sharp knife. Discard old central portion.
Flax	<i>Linum perenne</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or early fall	Difficult to re-establish after division. Dividing long, tangled roots is also difficult.

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Foamflower	<i>Tiarella wherryi</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Divide by hand.
Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis spp.</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	Transplant new plants in spring. Divide by hand.
Gas plant	<i>Dictamnus albus</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Divisions are difficult due to crown damage. A spade plunged straight down through the plant's center, cutting the roots cleanly without severe bruising gives best results. CAUTION: Wear gloves as contact may cause dermatitis.
Globe flower	<i>Trollius chinensis</i>	Annually; as needed	Fall	Slow to recover after transplanting.
Globe thistle	<i>Echinops ritro</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	Difficult to re-establish.
Goat's beard	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or fall	Does not re-establish easily after division due to a deep rootstock. Use knife to cut woody crown.
Golden dead nettle	<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	
Goldenrod	<i>Solidago spp.</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or fall	Divide with spade or pitchfork.
Hen & chicks	<i>Sempervivum tectorum</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	Separate small outer rosettes from parent plant.
Hollyhock mallow	<i>Malva alcea 'Fastigiata'</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	
Hosta	<i>Hosta spp.</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	If center of plant begins to get bare, cut out center and discard.
Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	Dig up and carefully divide woody roots.

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Iris - bearded, German	<i>Iris</i> spp.	1 to 3 years	4 to 6 weeks after flowers are finished blooming	Fewer blooms indicate need for rejuvenation. Cut groups of leaves back to fan shape to reduce water loss. Use a sharp knife to cut the rhizome (root) into 3-4" sections with at least on fan of leaves and roots. Discard older part of plant.
Iris - Siberian	<i>Iris siberica</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring* or late summer/early Fall**	*In spring divide before leaves are 3" to 4" tall. Dividing too late can stop bloom for an entire season. **In early fall, cut leaves back to 6" to 12" and then divide. Use sharp knife to cut rhizome.
Jack-in-the-pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphylla</i>	Annually; as needed	Fall	Divide offsets when plant is dormant
Jacob's ladder	<i>Polemonium coeruleum</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring	Divide by hand (no spade or fork).
Japanese painted fern	<i>Athyrium niponicum</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	Use sharp knife to cut rootstock.
Japanese spurge	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	
Joe Pye weed	<i>Eupatorium purpureum</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring to summer or early fall	Use knife to slice woody crown.
Lady fern	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	Use sharp knife to cut rootstock.
Lady's mantle	<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or early fall	Cut crown into sections with sharp spade or knife.
Lamb's ears	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or fall	Divide by hand.
Lenten rose	<i>Helleborus orientalis</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Divide while plants are in bloom or immediately after they finish flowering.
Liatris, blazing star, gayfeather	<i>Liatris spicata</i>	3 to 5 years	Spring	Cut into sections with sharp knife.

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Ligularia	<i>Ligularia spp.</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	
Lily	<i>Lilium</i>	Annually; as needed	Late summer / early fall	There are so many types of lilies, a whole book could be dedicated to how to divide each type.
Lily of the valley	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or after flowering	Division helps to keep the plant from taking over the garden bed.
Loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia spp.</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	
Lungwort	<i>Pulmonaria spp.</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring after flowering or fall	Water regularly following division
Lupine - Russell hybrid	<i>Lupinus 'Russell Hybrids'</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Does not like to be disturbed.
Maidenhair fern	<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	
Marsh marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Annually; as needed	After flowering - May or June	
Masterwort	<i>Astrantia spp.</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or fall	Divide with spade or pitchfork.
Meadow rue	<i>Thalictrum spp.</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring	Most species are slow to recover after division.
Milkweed	<i>Asclepias spp.</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Difficult to divide and re-establish due to a deep brittle taproot. Dig deeply. Cut crown apart with sharp knife.
Mint	<i>Mentha spp.</i>	3 to 5 years	Spring or fall	Use division to reduce aggressive spreading. Use a sharp knife or pruner to cut apart stolons (creeping stems on the soil surface with roots and shoots).
Monkshood	<i>Aconitum napellus</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Not easy to re-establish once disturbed. Due to poisonous nature of roots, use rubber gloves when dividing tuberous roots.

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Mum - garden, hardy	<i>Dendranthema x grandiflora</i>	Every year	Spring	Will survive longer and be most vigorous if divided and replanted every spring. Discard central core.
Obedient plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring	Spreads easily in moist soil conditions.
Ornamental grasses		Annually; as needed	Spring	Most grow well for years without division. Discard old, central portion of crown. Use sharp knife or spade to divide smaller grasses; use hatchet or ax on large grasses.
Ostrich fern	<i>Matteuccia pensylvanica</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	Use a sharp knife or pruner to cut apart the rhizome connecting the individual plants.
Painted daisy	<i>Tanacetum coccineum</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or late summer	
Pasque flower	<i>Pulsatilla vulgaris</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or fall	Does not like to be disturbed. Fragile roots may die if bruised.
Peony	<i>Paeonia sp.</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Early fall, mid-August / September	Does not like to be disturbed. Dig around plant & slit roots with sharp spade. Roots are thick and brittle. Replanting too deep can diminish flowering.
Perennial sweet pea	<i>Lathyrus latifolius</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Difficult to re-establish after division.
Periwinkle	<i>Vinca minor</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	
Phlox - creeping	<i>Phlox subulata</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or early fall	Replant only non-woody stems.
Phlox - tall	<i>Phlox paniculata</i>	2 to 4 years	Spring or late summer	Discard central core if woody or dead.
Pigsqueak, heart leaf Bergenia	<i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring or summer	Cut rhizome with sharp knife. Transplant divisions fairly deep into soil.
Pincushion flower	<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring	Plants can be slow to re-establish, but will do so eventually.

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Pinks	<i>Dianthus spp.</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring	Dividing every few years can often extend longevity.
Poppy - oriental	<i>Papaver orientale</i>	6 to 10 years	Mid- to late summer	Seeds if allowed. Transplants can be planted in the spring. Main plant does not like to be disturbed, so can be difficult to re-establish after transplant.
Prairie smoke	<i>Geum triflorum</i>	1 to 3 years	After flowering in late summer	Young plants can be easily dug up and transplanted.
Primrose	<i>Primula sp.</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring after flowering or early fall	Divide by hand.
Red barrenwort	<i>Epimedium x rubrum</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	If conditions are favorable, can be left undisturbed for years.
Rockcress	<i>Aubrieta deltoidea</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	
Rose mallow, perennial Hibiscus	<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or fall	Plants are slow to send up shoots in spring, so fall division might be easier.
Russian sage	<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or fall	Does not like to be disturbed, so transplanting can be challenging.
Sage	<i>Salvia spp.</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	Dividee when center of plant dies.
Sea lavender	<i>Limonium platyphyllum</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or early fall	Carefully divide the long roots.
Sedge	<i>Carex spp.</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring	Divide with spade or pitchfork.
Sensitive fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	
Shasta daisy	<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Regular division can extend their life. Discard old central portion.

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Snakeroot, bugbane	<i>Actaea racemosa</i> (formerly <i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>)	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Resents disturbance. Cut plant into sections with sharp knife or spade. Discard old, woody, central clump.
Sneezeweed, Helen's flower	<i>Helinium autumnale</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	
Snow-in-summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Can be divided virtually anytime.
Snow-on-the-mountain	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i> 'Variegatum'	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Can spread quickly and become aggressive.
Soapwort	<i>Saponaria ocymoides</i>	Annually; as needed	Any time during warmer months	
Solomon's seal	<i>Polygonatum odoratum</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring or fall	Use a sharp knife to cut up knobby rootstock.
Speedwell	<i>Veronica</i> spp.	3 to 5 years	Spring or early fall	
Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia x andersoniana</i>	3 to 5 years	Spring up until flowers bud and start to bloom	Division ensures replication of cultivars
Spotted dead nettle	<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	4 to 5 years	Spring	Can also be divided mid-summer if cut back and watered well while taking root.
Stonecrop	<i>Sedum</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring	Divide by hand.
Sundrops, evening primrose	<i>Oenothera</i> spp.	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or fall	Most species do not divide well. <i>Oenothera fruticosa</i> needs to be divided every 1 to 3 years.
Sunflower	<i>Helianthus</i> spp.	1 to 3 years	Spring or fall	Regular division improves performance and keeps this potentially aggressive plant under control.
Sweet woodruff	<i>Galium odoratum</i>	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	Divide by hand.

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Thrift	<i>Armeria</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring	
Thyme	<i>Thymus</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring	
Tickseed, Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis</i>	1 to 3 years	Spring or early fall	Cut crown apart with sharp knife. <i>Coreopsis grandiflora</i> and <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i> live longer if divided every 2 to 3 years.
Toad lily	<i>Tricyrtis hirta</i>	6 to 10 years	Spring	
Trillium	<i>Trillium grandiflorum</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring or late summer	Does not tolerate disturbance well.
Turtlehead	<i>Chelone</i> spp.	4 to 5 years	Spring	When young offshoots are 1" high, dig with spade to sever from parent plant.
Violet	<i>Viola</i> spp.	Annually; as needed	Spring or fall	Divide by hand.
Virginia bluebells	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	3 to 4 years	Spring	
Wild ginger	<i>Asarum</i> spp.	6 to 10 years	Spring or early fall	Use sharp knife to cut rhizome.
Yarrow	<i>Achillea</i> spp.	1 to 3 years	Spring	Separate by cutting or pulling apart. Discard central woody core.
Yucca, Adam's needle, ivory tower	<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Rarely; every 10+ years	Spring	Resents disturbance, so divide only young plants. Established plants have deep, thick roots.