

Periwinkle or Vinca

Catharanthus roseus

Also known as *Vinca rosea*, *Vinca multiflora*, periwinkle grows 7 to 24 inches high and wide, forming a mound of colorful flowers in white, pink, or rosy purple on brittle stems. Cultivars are available with carpet-like or upright habits. Flowering is prolific throughout the warm months, although plants may establish poorly in very hot weather. The plant tolerates heat and flowers in the hottest weather, probably better than most other flowering ground covers. Spaced 12 to 20 inches apart, plants will form a solid mass of mounded foliage and flowers 6 to 8 weeks after sowing seed, provided they are fertilized, watered lightly (or not at all), and planted in full sun. Derivatives from periwinkle are used in a variety of medicines and treatments for human ailments including leukemia and Hodgkin's disease.

Type: annual; perennial; herbaceous; ground cover

USDA hardiness zones: 9b through 11

Uses: edging; ground cover; mass planting; naturalizing; hanging basket; cascading down a wall; border

Origin: Africa

Height: 1-2 feet **Spread:** 1-2 feet

Plant spacing: 12-20 inches

Light requirement: Full sun

Soil pH: clay; sand; acidic; slightly alkaline; loam

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: No pests are of major concern.

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Credit: Frances Andrews,
Santa Rosa County, MGv