



For the joy of gardening!

Estabrook's

BRACTED HYDRANGEA CARE

LIGHT

Bracted hydrangea (*Hydrangea involucrata*), including Blue Bunny, suits sun to partial sun with reliable soil moisture. It also tolerates shaded conditions. Check the cultivar's winter hardiness before choosing an exposed Maine site; Blue Bunny is generally listed for USDA zones 6-9.

WATER

Water deeply after planting and check the original root ball regularly during establishment. Maintain moderate, even moisture through summer dry periods. Water at soil level and allow excess water to drain. Avoid repeatedly drying roots or leaving them in saturated ground.

SOIL & PLANTING

Plant at nursery depth in moisture-retentive, well-drained soil. Mulch around the root zone without covering the stem bases. Give the shrub room for its broad leaves and strong stems. Containers require closer watering checks and a winter plan suited to the local climate.

FEEDING

Feed modestly in spring only if needed, following soil-test guidance and label rates. Blue Bunny's blue flower color is not changed by adding aluminum or manipulating soil acidity. Do not apply flower-color products intended for bigleaf hydrangeas to force a different display.

SEASONAL CARE

Flowers form on new growth. Little pruning is needed; in cold climates, wait until spring growth reveals winter damage, then remove affected portions. Thin old stems only when necessary. This routine differs from the old-wood protection needed by Fairytrail and bigleaf hydrangeas.

HELPFUL TIPS

The rounded, peony-like buds open to a later summer display, so allow time before assuming the shrub will not bloom. Keep leaves and stems uncrowded. Check soil moisture and drainage when wilting appears, and confirm cultivar hardiness before relying on outdoor overwintering.