FOTHERGILLA CARE

LIGHT

Fothergilla grows in full sun to partial shade. Reliable moisture makes a sunny position easier to manage; some afternoon shelter is useful in hot exposures. Dwarf gardenii types, larger major types and hybrids differ greatly in size, so follow the cultivar label.

WATER

Water thoroughly at planting and check the original root ball throughout establishment. Keep the root zone moderately moist during dry periods. Avoid repeated drying, especially in sun or near thirsty tree roots. Water the soil slowly rather than relying on brief overhead sprinkling.

SOIL & PLANTING

Plant at nursery depth in organic, acidic, moisture-retentive but well-drained soil. Mulch over the root zone and leave stems uncovered. Avoid alkaline sites unless soil conditions can be managed appropriately. Allow space for mature branches and occasional suckering shoots.

FEEDING

Use a soil test before changing soil pH. If feeding is needed, apply a modest spring fertilizer appropriate for acid-loving shrubs at the labeled rate. Yellowing leaves can reflect unsuitable soil chemistry or root trouble; more fertilizer alone may not solve the problem.

SEASONAL CARE

Little pruning is normally needed. Shape lightly just after the spring flower display, since flowers develop on older wood. Remove dead or crossing branches selectively. Avoid routine hard cutting or shearing, which disrupts the shrub's natural outline and reduces flowering.

HELPFUL TIPS

Honey-scented bottlebrush flowers and autumn foliage provide seasonal interest. Cultivar names are more useful than the word dwarf alone when planning space. Remove unwanted suckers if a colony is not desired. Check persistent leaf spotting or poor growth rather than treating without a diagnosis.