FLOWERS · A PORCH WITH MORNING SUN AND AFTERNOON SHADE

Let's grow begonia.

Begonia Semperflorens-Cultorum Group — compact wax types

This plan is for **Compact wax begonia**

Is this your plant? Choose a compact wax begonia (semperflorens or fibrous-rooted) with a mature spread about 6–12 inches. This outdoor pot plan is not for a tuberous, rex, large cane, BIG, or Whopper begonia.

Small flowers for a sheltered, partly shaded corner.

12 in. wide × 10 in. deep **1 nursery plant**

Before you start

Set this compact wax type outdoors after frost danger and when soil reaches at least 60°F. Start with morning sun and afternoon shade; bring a living plant or cutting indoors before frost.

By jennyzhuang

Sources checked September 25, 2026 View sources

LIGHT

Gentle morning sun

Give bright shade or a little morning sun; protect from hot afternoon sun.

WATER

Moist, never soggy

Let the surface begin to dry, then water the roots and drain.

FEEDING

Light, measured upkeep

Use the enriched mix first, then feed a growing outdoor plant monthly.

Begonias are toxic to cats and dogs if eaten. Keep this ornamental pot away from pets that chew plants.

BEFORE YOU START

Your little kit.

- ✓ 1 compact wax begonia nursery plant
- ✓ One pot at least 12 inches wide and 10 inches deep, with drainage
- ✓ Fresh potting mix and a watering can with a narrow spout

THE SOIL

Miracle-Gro Organic Potting Mix (US, with starter nutrients; check your bag for its additional-feeding directions)

Start with what's on this list. Add plant food only when the feeding section says it's needed.

YOUR SIMPLE GROWING PLAN

One pot. Here's the plan.

A porch with morning sun and afternoon shade. Start with **nursery plant**.

THE POT

12 in. wide × 10 in. deep

One draining pot for one compact wax begonia; this roomy starter layout is not a universal minimum for every begonia.

HOW MANY

1 nursery plant

Choose a compact wax begonia, such as a Cocktail Group plant, with a mature spread around 12 inches.

THE CONTAINER

12 in. wide × 10 in. deep



START WITH

1 nursery plant

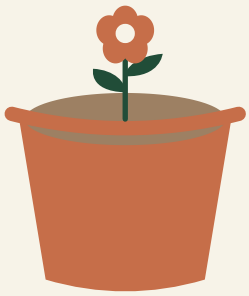


Illustration · not to scale

12 in. wide × 10 in. deep · 1 nursery plant One draining pot for one compact wax begonia; this roomy starter layout is not a universal minimum for every begonia. Choose a compact wax begonia, such as a Cocktail Group plant, with a mature spread around 12 inches. Original illustration; not to scale.

01

Read the type on the tag

Choose “wax,” “fibrous-rooted,” or “semperflorens” begonia. A tuberous begonia, rex begonia, or large angel-wing plant needs a different plan.

02

Plant gently

Keep the nursery root-ball surface at the new mix surface. Handle the root ball rather than pulling on brittle stems. Leave 1 inch below the rim.

03

Water and shelter

Water until excess drains. Put the pot where it gets gentle light, shelter from strong wind, and space around its leaves.

04

Clear fallen debris

Remove mushy leaves or fallen flowers from the pot. Check moisture before adding water; do not keep its fleshy stems surrounded by wet debris.

Help with the setup: drainage holes and saucers · potting mix vs. garden soil.

Other ways to start

Root a stem cutting

Cut a healthy 2–3-inch stem tip with clean tools and remove its lower leaves. Stand the bare part in water, keeping the remaining leaves above it. When roots form, move it to a small draining pot of moist mix. Minnesota Extension gives roughly 3–4 weeks for begonia cuttings; actual rooting time varies.

Start from seed well ahead

Wax begonia seeds are tiny and seedlings grow slowly. Surface-sow indoors about 16 weeks before planting out; do not bury the seeds. For one first-time pot, a nursery plant saves months.

YOUR EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Water & fertilizer at a glance.

WATER WHEN

Check daily in warm weather. Water as the upper inch begins drying; drain. Keep deeper roots lightly moist, without standing water.

FERTILIZER

Jack's Classic Blossom Booster (US 10-30-20)

AMOUNT

1 level tablespoon in 1 US gallon of water

WHAT THAT AMOUNT COVERS

Mix into water. Apply only enough solution to wet this pot and drain; the mixing batch is not the amount to pour on.

HOW OFTEN TO FEED

Once a month while the outdoor plant is budding or flowering.

WHEN TO START OR PAUSE

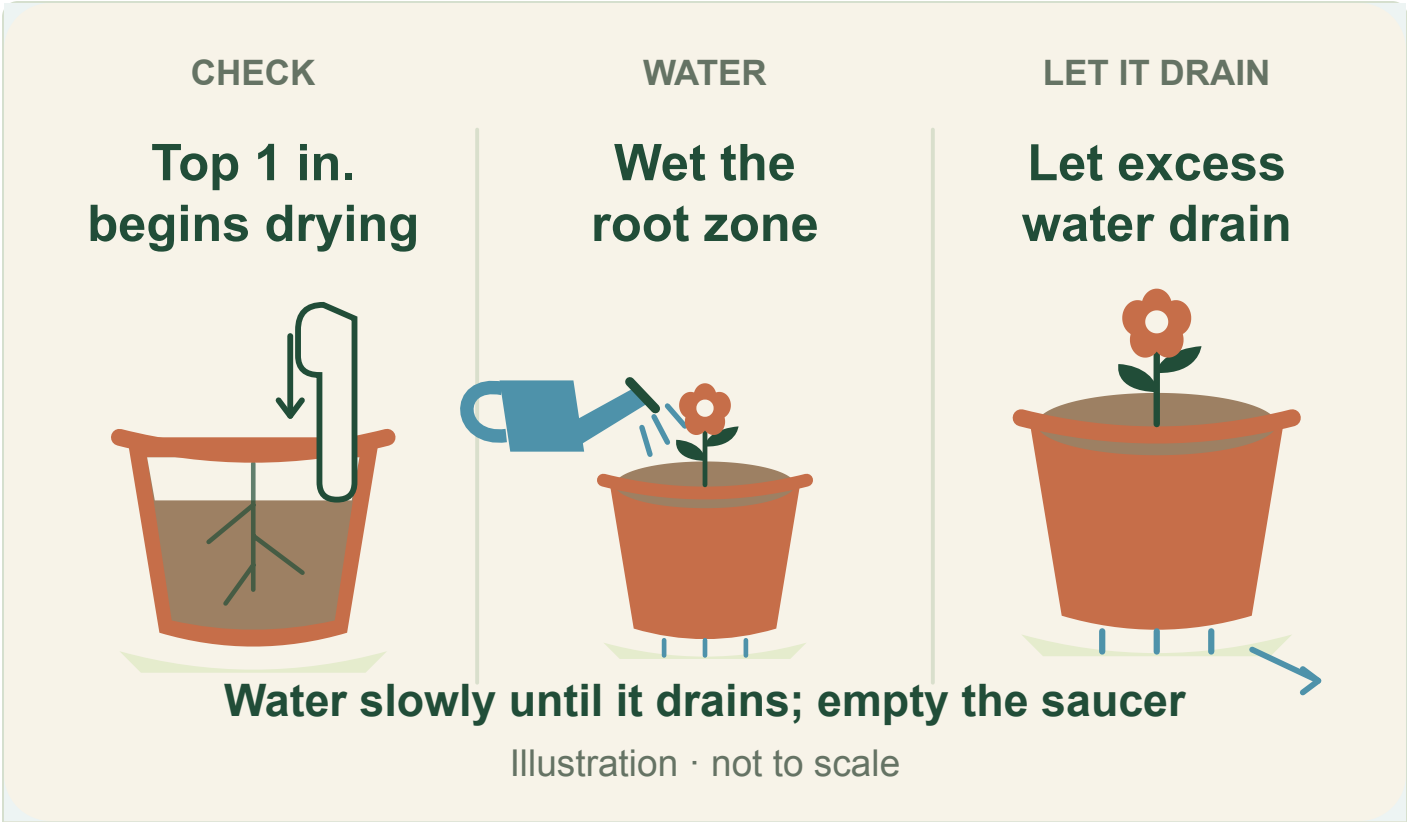
Use the mix's starter nutrients first, following its bag directions. Delay a feed if wet. Stop this outdoor recipe indoors for winter or when growth stops.

JR Peters supplies the outdoor concentration; Minnesota Extension supports monthly begonia feeding. This interval is a plant-specific choice, not the brand's general 7–10-day schedule.

01 / EVERYDAY CARE

When to water.

Check daily in warm weather. When the upper inch begins drying, water at the base until excess drains; empty the saucer. Keep the deeper mix lightly moist. Do not water again simply because another day has passed. A shaded pot can dry much more slowly than one in sun or wind. Indoors over winter, check the mix and water less often as growth slows. Soft, dark stems in wet mix call for a drainage and rot check, not extra food or water.



Check before watering. Check daily in warm weather. Water as the upper inch begins drying; drain. Keep deeper roots lightly moist, without standing water. Original illustration; not to scale.

> **The easy rule**
>
> Check first. Water only when the plant needs it.

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02 / PLANT FOOD

Exactly what to feed it.

Start with the nutrients already in the named potting mix. Check your purchased bag for when to begin additional feeding; do not assume every enriched mix feeds for the same number of weeks. Another mix may contain a different starter feed or none. Do not add a second full feeding program at planting. Once additional feeding is due, use the monthly outdoor plan below while buds and flowers are developing.



1 level tablespoon in 1 US gallon of water Mix into water. Apply only enough solution to wet this pot and drain; the mixing batch is not the amount to pour on. Once a month while the outdoor plant is budding or flowering. Use the mix's starter nutrients first, following its bag directions. Delay a feed if wet. Stop this outdoor recipe indoors for winter or when growth stops. Original illustration; not to scale.



US PRODUCT REFERENCE

Jack's Classic

Blossom Booster

10-30-20

Soluble: mix into water

Check the official US product ↗

Illustrated reference; check the manufacturer's current packaging and US label.

A SPECIFIC US PRODUCT

Jack's Classic Blossom Booster (US 10-30-20)

Mix 1 level tablespoon of Jack's Classic Blossom Booster 10-30-20 in 1 US gallon of water. After the starter feed, apply once a month while this outdoor wax begonia is actively budding or blooming. The concentration follows JR Peters; monthly feeding follows Minnesota Extension's begonia guidance and is less frequent than the manufacturer's general outdoor schedule. Use only enough solution to wet the roots and drain. Wait if the mix is wet; do not combine with another full-rate feed. Stop this outdoor recipe when bringing the plant indoors for winter.

Check the manufacturer's product page ↗

The outdoor mixing strength comes from JR Peters. The monthly interval is a more conservative begonia-specific plan based on Minnesota Extension; it is not the manufacturer's general 7–10-day schedule.

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03 / WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Warm-season flowers and mature size

Compact wax begonias usually make a mound roughly 6–12 inches tall and wide. The small flowers can continue through the warm season. This plan gives one plant room to grow rather than packing several into a small pot.

When to plant outside or bring indoors

Wait until frost danger has passed and conditions are warm; Minnesota Extension uses soil temperatures of at least 60°F for planting begonias outdoors. Bring a healthy plant indoors before frost if saving it. This wax type stays leafy; it does not have a tuber to dig and store dry.

For regional planting windows, find your local Cooperative Extension office ↗.

Something looking off?

Is this care plan for all begonias?

No. This recipe is for compact wax begonias. Tuberous types have a dormant storage season, cane types can grow tall, and rex types are usually grown for patterned foliage. Start with the name on the tag.

Can it take full sun?

Bronze-leaved wax begonias usually handle sun better than green-leaved ones, but a morning-sun, afternoon-shade spot is a forgiving first choice. Move gradually and watch for scorched leaves.

Why are stems going soft?

Persistent wetness can cause rot. Check drainage and let a wet pot dry somewhat before watering again. Discard collapsed, rotting material; fertilizer cannot repair decayed roots.

Leaf care and choosing the right size

Keep leaves airy and clear decaying debris

Water the mix, leave air around the foliage, and remove decaying debris. Repeatedly misting the leaves is not required and can keep the canopy damp.

Check the mature spread before choosing a pot

Read the mature spread on the nursery tag. The 12-inch pot here gives one compact, roughly 6–12-inch-wide wax begonia space to fill out. Large BIG and Whopper types need a different layout. If saving this fibrous-rooted type for winter, keep a living plant or cutting indoors; there is no dormant tuber to store dry.

Help with your next step.

Set up a pot that drains

Choose drainage holes and manage the saucer before you plant.

Read the fertilizer already in your mix

Check the actual bag before adding a second fertilizer program.

BEHIND THIS GUIDE

Where the advice comes from.

Plant care is based on the sources below. Planting layouts and beginner routines combine that guidance into one practical plan; they are editorial choices, not results from a Plant Care Steps growing trial.

- NC State: wax begonia identity, compact size, and light tolerance ↗
  https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/begonia-wax-types/
- Minnesota Extension: begonia types, propagation, and cold sensitivity ↗
  https://extension.umn.edu/garden-and-home/yard-and-garden/gardening-in-minnesota/begonia
- Iowa State: checking and watering container plants ↗
  https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/care-plants-growing-containers
- JR Peters: Blossom Booster product identity ↗
  https://www.jrpeters.com/online-store/Blossom-Booster-10-30-20-p184837332
- Manufacturer: US fertilizer formula and application directions ↗
  https://www.jrpeters.com/copy-of-draft-resources-for-garden-ce
- Manufacturer: starter feed in the named potting mix ↗
  https://scottsmiraclegro.com/en-us/brands/miracle-gro/products/potting-mix/miracle-gro-organic-potting-mix/78951430.html

Something needs updating? Suggest a correction

Published September 23, 2026 · Updated September 25, 2026

Compiled with AI assistance. These first-edition guides have not yet had an independent horticultural review. Read our editorial approach.