FLOWERS · A SUNNY PATIO WITH A SECURELY ANCHORED SUPPORT

Let's grow clematis.

Clematis 'Arabella' — Integrifolia Group

This plan is for **Arabella · non-clinging clematis**

Is this your plant? Choose blue-purple 'Arabella' from the Integrifolia Group. Its stems need tying; this plan cuts them to about 12 inches in late winter or early spring. White Arabella is a different plant with a different pruning plan.

Blue-purple flowers with one simple spring cut.

18 in. wide × 18 in. deep **1 nursery plant**

Before you start

Plant in moderate spring or early-fall weather. Secure a support for its non-clinging stems; protect an exposed container from severe winter freezing.

By jennyzhuang

Sources checked September 25, 2026 View sources ↗

LIGHT

Sun above, cool roots below

Give the shoots at least 6 hours of sun; shade the outside of the pot from baking heat.

WATER

Likes steady moisture

Check daily and water when the top inch begins to dry.

FEEDING

Feed while actively growing

Use the fresh mix's nutrients first, then a measured general-purpose feed.

Clematis is toxic to cats and dogs if eaten. Its sap can irritate skin; wear gloves when pruning or taking cuttings.

BEFORE YOU START

Your little kit.

- ✓ 1 labeled Clematis 'Arabella' nursery plant
- ✓ One pot at least 18 inches wide and deep, with drainage holes
- ✓ Fresh potting mix, a 6-ft trellis or obelisk, and soft plant ties

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 sunny patio with a securely anchored support. Start with **nursery plant**.

THE POT

18 in. wide × 18 in. deep

One large pot with drainage, plus a separate, securely anchored 6-ft support.

HOW MANY

1 nursery plant

Buy blue-purple 'Arabella', a non-clinging Group 3 clematis. White Arabella is different.

THE CONTAINER

18 in. wide × 18 in. deep



START WITH

1 nursery plant



Illustration · not to scale

18 in. wide × 18 in. deep · 1 nursery plant One large pot with drainage, plus a separate, securely anchored 6-ft support. Buy blue-purple 'Arabella', a non-clinging Group 3 clematis. White Arabella is different. Original illustration; not to scale.

01

Set up the support first

Anchor the trellis so wind cannot pull over the pot. Leave access to the mix for watering. Shade the pot's sunny side with another container while keeping the shoots in sun.

02

Keep this crown at the surface

Fill with moist potting mix and set 'Arabella' with its crown at the mix surface. Leave 1 inch below the rim for watering. Do not borrow the deep-burial rule for large-flowered climbing clematis.

03

Water the whole root ball

Water slowly until excess drains. Check the original nursery root ball as well as the surrounding mix over the first few weeks.

04

Tie new stems loosely

Guide stems up the support and add loose ties as they lengthen. 'Arabella' does not grip a trellis by itself; leave room for stems to thicken.

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

Other ways to start

Plant the same cultivar in a garden bed

Allow about 3 ft of width beside a support or a low shrub it can scramble through. Keep the crown at ground level in fertile, well-drained soil. An established plant in fertile garden soil does not need the container feeding schedule.

Make another plant by layering

Pin a flexible, healthy shoot into a small pot of moist propagation mix while it remains attached to the parent. Let the tip stay above the mix. Keep it attached until a separate root system forms; layering can take one to two years. It is an option for an established plant, not a quick replacement for buying a nursery start.

YOUR EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Water & fertilizer at a glance.

WATER WHEN

Check daily during growth. Water as the upper inch starts drying; drain. A dormant winter pot needs less water, but roots should not dry out completely.

FERTILIZER

Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16)

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

Every 14 days during active growth.

WHEN TO START OR PAUSE

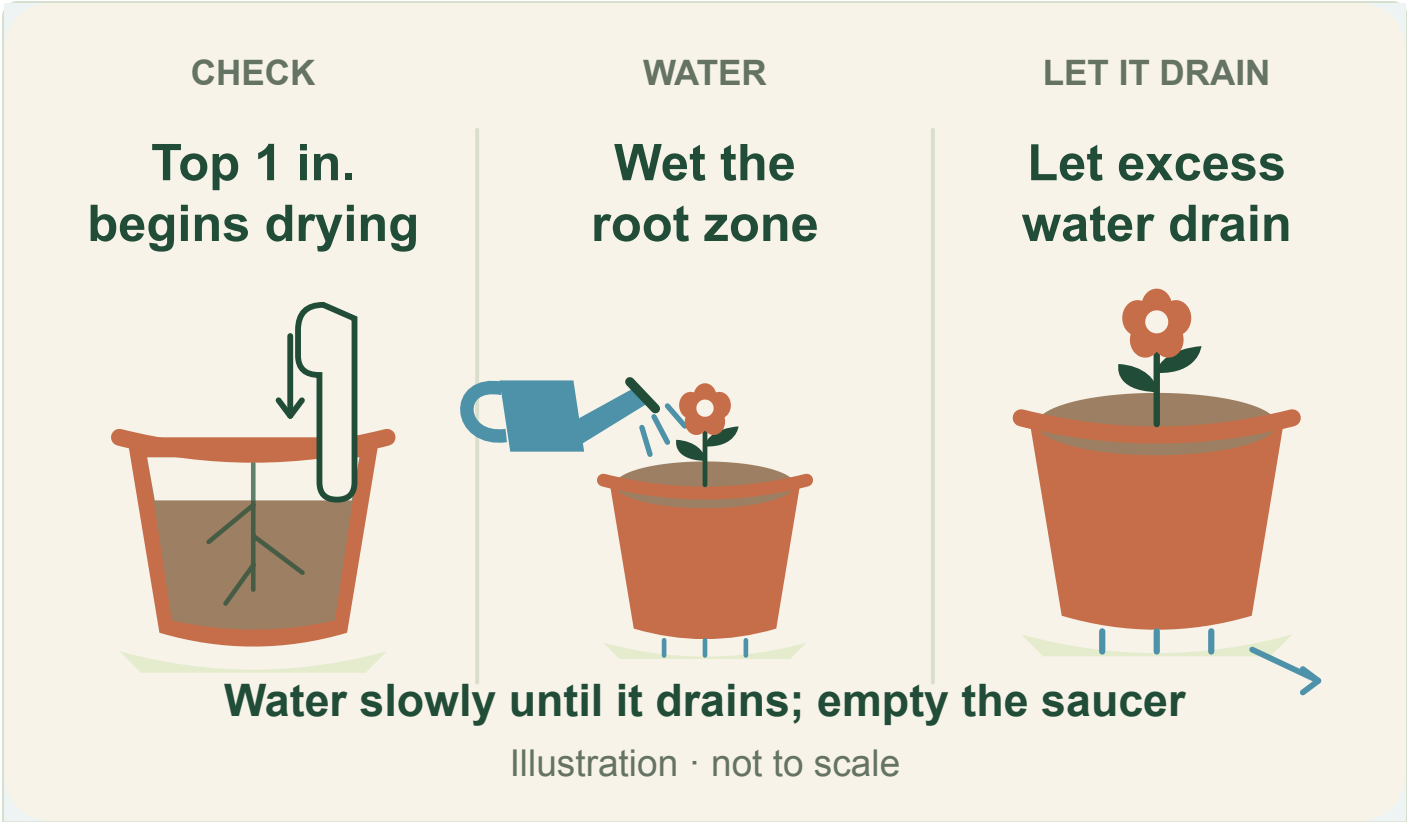
Read the potting-mix bag for when additional feed begins. Feed only during active spring or summer growth; delay if wet and stop in winter dormancy.

The 14-day interval is within the manufacturer's outdoor range. This is one measured feeding program, not an extra dose over another full-rate fertilizer.

01 / EVERYDAY CARE

When to water.

Check every morning during active growth. When the upper inch starts to dry, slowly water until drainage begins. Empty the saucer. In hot or windy weather, check again later; in cool wet weather, wait. Do not let the whole root ball become dry. A dormant winter pot needs much less water, but its roots should not desiccate.



Check before watering. Check daily during growth. Water as the upper inch starts drying; drain. A dormant winter pot needs less water, but roots should not dry out completely. 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. Begin the feed below only during active spring or summer growth.



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. Every 14 days during active growth. Read the potting-mix bag for when additional feed begins. Feed only during active spring or summer growth; delay if wet and stop in winter dormancy. Original illustration; not to scale.



US PRODUCT REFERENCE

Miracle-Gro

Water Soluble All Purpose

24-8-16

Soluble: mix into water

Check the official US product ↗

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

A SPECIFIC US PRODUCT

Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16)

Use US Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food 24-8-16: dissolve 1 level tablespoon in 1 US gallon of water. After the mix's starter feeding period, apply at the roots every 14 days during active growth. This is the manufacturer's outdoor concentration at the longer end of its 7–14-day interval. Use only enough solution for a thorough watering; a gallon is the mixing batch, not a dose for one pot. Delay if the mix is wet. Stop during winter dormancy and avoid adding a second full-rate fertilizer.

Check the manufacturer's product page ↗

A measured water-soluble feed used only after the potting mix's starter nutrients run out. Use the specific US formula and dilution below.

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03 / WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Summer flowers and stem growth

'Arabella' has blue-purple flowers that fade toward mauve and pale blue. Monrovia lists trained growth around 3–6 ft tall and 2–3 ft wide; other growing conditions can produce longer stems. Expect summer into early fall color once established, rather than an instant wall of flowers.

Planting windows and winter protection

Plant in moderate spring or early-fall weather. Monrovia lists USDA zones 4–9 for this cultivar in the ground. Roots in an exposed pot freeze more readily: in cold-winter areas, arrange a sheltered overwintering place or sink the pot into the ground before hard freezing.

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

Something looking off?

When do I prune this clematis?

For labeled blue-purple 'Arabella', cut old stems to about 12 inches above the mix in late winter or early spring, just above healthy buds and before vigorous new growth. Protect shoots emerging at the base. Monrovia gives this 1-ft cut for 'Arabella'; do not hard-prune an unidentified clematis from this recipe.

Why will it not climb by itself?

That is normal for 'Arabella'. It scrambles rather than clinging. Tie stems loosely to the support, or let them grow through a low shrub.

Can I use this pruning plan for any clematis?

No. Spring-flowering Group 1 and many early-flowering Group 2 cultivars need different treatment. Keep the nursery name and pruning group; hard cutting the wrong plant can remove its coming flowers.

Checking the cultivar and refreshing the pot

Distinguish Arabella from White Arabella

Blue-purple 'Arabella' is an Integrifolia Group plant with non-clinging stems. The white-flowered cultivar sold as White Arabella is not the same plant and has a different pruning recommendation.

Refresh old mix and repot when crowded

Refresh the top 2 inches of old mix each spring, taking care around the crown and shallow roots. Fresh enriched mix also brings nutrients, so account for it before adding liquid feed. When roots fill the pot and watering becomes difficult, repot or move the plant into a garden bed. Keep drainage holes open over winter.

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.

- Monrovia: Arabella size, US zones, watering, and Group 3 pruning ↗
  https://www.monrovia.com/arabella-clematis.html
- RHS: Arabella identity, crown depth, and propagation ↗
  https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/80890/clematis-arabella-i/details
- RHS: clematis containers, roots, and feeding ↗
  https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/clematis/growing-guide
- RHS: Group 3 pruning ↗
  https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/clematis/group-three-pruning-guide
- RHS: White Arabella is a different Group 2 cultivar ↗
  https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/382791/clematis-white-arabella-zo14089/details
- Manufacturer: US fertilizer formula and application directions ↗
  https://scottsmiraclegro.com/en-us/brands/miracle-gro/products/plant-food-and-care/miracle-gro-water-soluble-all-purpose-plant-food.html
- 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
- ASPCA: clematis is toxic to cats and dogs ↗
  https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/aspca-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants/clematis

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.