

How to Propagate Primula auricula

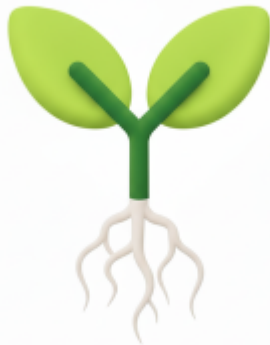


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Multiply Your Magic: The Joys of Propagating Auriculas

Primula auriculas, with their charming rosettes of velvety leaves and vibrant, intricate blooms, are a true delight in any garden. But did you know these captivating beauties are surprisingly easy to multiply? That's right! Propagating auriculas is a rewarding endeavor that allows you to expand your collection and share the joy with others.

This guide delves into the two most popular methods of propagating auriculas:

Method 1: Division – Separating for Success

Division is the most common and straightforward way to propagate auriculas. It involves gently separating established plants to create new ones. Here's how:

- 1. Timing is Key:** The best time for division is after

flowering, ideally in late spring or early summer.

2. **Prepare for Success:** Gather a clean, sharp knife or gardening shears, a pot filled with well-draining compost (a mix of loam, grit, and leaf mold works well), and a watering can.
3. **Gentle Separation:** Carefully lift the mature auricula plant from its pot or the ground. Gently tease apart the plant at the roots, ensuring each section has a good amount of roots and leaves. Larger sections establish faster.
4. **Potting Up:** Plant each division in its own pot with the compost, firming it gently around the roots. Water thoroughly.
5. **Nurture and Growth:** Place the newly potted divisions in a shaded area and keep the soil consistently moist. New growth indicates successful rooting.

Method 2: Seed Starting – A Journey of Patience and Reward

Starting auriculas from seed offers a unique opportunity to grow unusual varieties and experience the full lifecycle of the plant. While slightly more time-consuming, it is equally rewarding. Here's what to do:

1. **Seed Collection:** After flowering, allow the seed heads to dry on the plant. Collect the seeds by gently shaking the heads over a container.
2. **Sowing Time:** Sow seeds in late summer or early autumn.
3. **Well-Draining Mix:** Choose a seed tray or pot with drainage holes and fill it with a well-draining seed compost.
4. **Surface Sow:** Sprinkle the seeds thinly over the surface of the compost and gently press them down. Auricula seeds need light to germinate, so avoid burying them.
5. **Moisture and Patience:** Mist the surface with water and cover the container with a plastic dome or cling film to retain moisture. Place the tray in a cool, well-lit location out of direct sunlight. Germination can take

several weeks to a couple of months.

6. **Pricking Out:** Once the seedlings have developed a couple of true leaves, carefully transplant them into individual pots filled with the potting mix recommended for divisions.
7. **Nurturing Growth:** As with divisions, keep the seedlings in a shaded spot and maintain consistent moisture.

Important Tips for Success:

- **Well-Draining Soil:** Auriculas are highly susceptible to root rot, so ensure excellent drainage in pots and garden beds.
- **Partial Shade:** While they enjoy some sun, auriculas thrive in partially shaded locations, especially during the hottest part of the day.
- **Regular Watering:** Keep the soil consistently moist but avoid waterlogging.
- **Slug and Snail Patrol:** These critters find auriculas irresistible! Protect your plants with copper tape, crushed eggshells, or organic slug pellets.

Propagating auriculas, whether through division or seeds, is a fulfilling experience that allows you to cultivate these charming beauties in abundance. So why not give it a try? With a bit of care and attention, you'll be rewarded with a flourishing collection of these captivating plants.