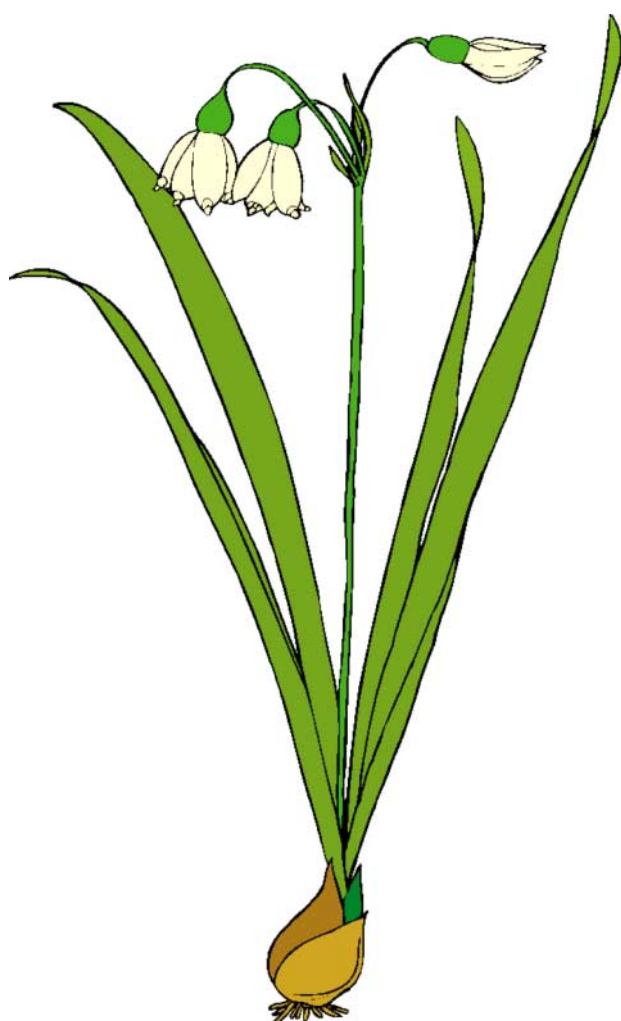
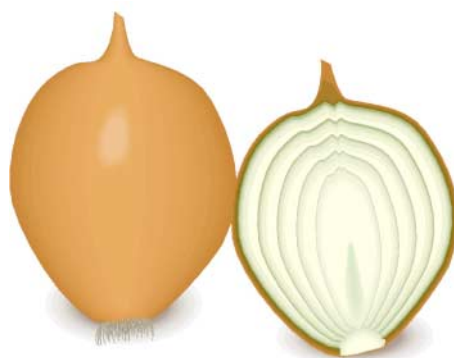


Bulbs

The summer flowers are fading and we'll soon be thinking of getting our gardens ready for next year. One of the easiest ways of getting colour into your garden is to plant flower bulbs. You dig a hole, pop the bulb in (the right way up of course!) and cover it with soil. The following spring you'll have a beautiful flower without



having had to work very hard. But what is a bulb and how does it work?

Many of you will probably have planted a daffodil, or maybe a tulip. These are grown from bulbs.

Another well-known bulb is the onion. Though it's a vegetable and not a flower, it still behaves in a similar way.

A bulb is an underground stem, which is surrounded by fleshy scales. These scales are modified leaf structures. The scales contain the

What is the right way to plant a bulb?

Firstly you must dig a hole deep enough. A general rule is to work out how high the bulb is and dig a hole three times deeper than its height. Planting it this deep will make sure that the plant is well anchored in the ground when it grows.

It is important to put the bulb into the hole the right way up, otherwise as the plant grows it is facing the wrong way and so has to work a lot harder to grow the right way up - if it can at all! If you are a little confused by which way is up, many bulbs have a stubby root on the bottom.

Once in the ground, cover the bulb with soil and firm the ground. Watering the bulb after planting will help to settle it in and close any air pockets around it.



nutrients necessary to produce a flower in the following growing season.

When you buy bulbs in a shop you are buying the bulbs during their dormant season. Dormant means that they are inactive. They are no longer growing and they have a papery outer layer. This is because they have been removed from the ground once the flowers have died away and the outer layer has been allowed to dry out.