A perennial is any plant that lives and flowers more than two years. Many of the plants below may be marginally hardy in northern locations of the state or in southern locations where summers are particularly hot. Some of the plants below are grown from bulbs or similar underground structures. Species marked with an asterisk need to be lifted each fall, stored over winter, and replanted the following spring. Consult with a reputable garden center or greenhouse for advice on perennials best suited for your particular location.

Cut Flowers

Below are a few of the more commonly grown species for use in arrangements and bouquets that are equally attractive in the flower garden. See Extension Fact Sheet HLA-6407 for ideas on flower arrangements and bouquets. Growers should refer to Extension Fact Sheet HLA-6426, “The Care and Handling of Cut Flowers.”

Ageratum, Hardy (Eupatorium coelestinum)
Astilbe (Astilbe x arendsi)
Buby’s breath (Gypsophila paniculata)
Bachelor’s buttons (Centaurea montana ‘Mountain Bluet’)
Bee balm (Monarcla didyma)
Blackberry lily (Belamcancla chinensis)
Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta var. pulcherrima)
Bleeding heart (Dicentra eximia) (Dicentra spectabilis)
Butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa)
*Calla lily (Zantedeschia aethiopica)
*Canna (Canna x generalis)
Clematis, Jackman (Clematis x jackmanii)
Columbine (Aquilegia hybrids)
Coneflower (Echinacea purpurea)
Coralbells (Heuchera sanguinea)
Coreopsis (Coreopsis lanceolata)
Dahlia (Dahla hybrids)
Daisy, Painted (Chrysanthemum coccineum)
Daisy, Shasta (Chrysanthemum x superbum)
Fountain grass (Pennisetum alopecuroides)
Foxglove (Digitalis purpurea)

Showy Foliage

These plants may be used to lend interest to surrounding flowering plants or for foliage in bouquets. Many of these species are equally striking when planted alone.

Ajuga (Ajuga reptans)
Bergenia (Bergenia cordifolia)
Bishop’s goutweed (Aegopodium podagraria ‘Variegatum’)
*Caladium (Caladium x hortulanum)
Candytuft, Evergreen (Iberis sempervirens)
*Elephant’s-ear (Colocasia esculenta)
Fern, Christmas (Polystichum acrostichoides)
Fern, Dragontail (Asplenium ebenoides)
Fern, Lady (Athyrium filix-femina)
Fern, Marginal shield (Dryopteris marginalis)
Figure 1. Gayfeather (*Liatris* spp.)

Figure 2. Iris (*Iris* hybrids)

Figure 3. Japanese Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*)

Figure 4. Spike Speedwell (*Veronica spicata*)

Figure 5. Fragrant Plantain-Lily (*Hosta plantaginea*)

Figure 6. Giant Onion (*Allium giganteum*)
Figure 7. Garden Peony (*Paeonia lactiflora*)

Figure 8. Ferlead Yarrow (*Achillea filipendulina*)

Figure 9. Astible (*Astile x arendsii*)

Figure 10. Butterfly Bush (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

Figure 11. Daylily (*Hemerocallis species*)

Figure 12. Gas Plant (*Dictamus albus*)
Fern, Royal (Osmunda regalis)
Fern, Sensitive (Onoclea sensibilis)
Fescue, Blue (Festuca ovina ‘Glaucia’)
Grass, Fountain (Pennisetum alopecuroides)
Grass, Plume (Erianthus ravennae)
Hen-and-chickens (Sempervivum tectorum)
Hosta (Hosta hyacinthia)
Japanese Blood Grass (Imperata cylindrica var. rubra ‘Red Baron’)
Japanese Sweet Flag (Acorus gramineus ‘Variegata’)
Lamb’s ear (Stachys byzantina)
Lavendar cotton (Santolina chamaecyparissus)
Plantain lily, Wavy-leaved (Hosta undulata)
Plantain lily (Hosta lancifolia var. albomarginata)
Ribbon grass (Phalaris arundinacea var. picta)
Rue (Ruta graveolens)
Sedum (Sedum spp.)
Yucca (Yucca filamentosa)
Wormwood (Artemisia schmidtiana ‘Silver Mound’)

Large Background

Tall plants can serve as background for shorter perennials or annuals. These species may also be used as barriers to hide unsightly areas. Be certain when buying these plants that you get a tall cultivar and not a dwarf.

Astilbe (Astilbe x arendsi)
Baby’s breath (Gypsophila paniculata)
Bee balm (Monarda didyma)
Butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa)
*Canna (Canna x generalis)
Chrysanthemum, Hardy (Dendranthemum grandiflorum)
Columbine (Aquilegia hybrids)
Coneflower, Purple (Echinacea purpurea)
Crown Imperial (Fritillaria imperialis)
Daylily (Hemerocallis spp.)
*Elephant’s-ear (Colotasis esculenta)
Four O’Clocks (Mirabilis jalapa)
Foxglove (Digitalis purpurea)
Gas plant (Dictamnus albus)
*Gladiolus (Gladiolus x hortulanus)
Hibiscus (Hibiscus moschutos)
Hollyhock (Alcea rosea)
Indigo, False (Baptisia australis)
Iris, Bearded (Iris hybrids)
Jupitersbeard (Centranthus ruber)
Lily, Garden (Lilium hybrids)
Loosestrife (Lythrum clethroides)
Magic lily (Lycoris squamigera)
Onion, Giant (Allium giganteum)
Pampas grass (Cortaderia selloana)
Peony (Paeonia hybrids)
Peony, Tree (Paeonia suffruticosa)
Phlox, Tall (Phlox paniculata)

Prefer or Tolerate Light Shade

These plants may need protection from the sun. Many of these will suffer without protection from harsh Oklahoma conditions.

Ajuga (Ajuga reptans)
Astilbe (Astilbe x arendsi)
Bergenia (Bergenia cordifolia)
Bleeding heart (Dicentra eximia) (D. spectabilis)
*Caladium (Caladium x hortulanum)
Coralbells (Heuchera sanguinea)
Daylily (Hemerocallis spp.)
Fern, Dragontail (Asplenium scolopendrium)
Fern, Lady (Athyrium filix-femina)
Fern, Royal (Osmunda regalis)
Four O’Clocks (Mirabilis jalapa)
Gloxinia, Hardy (Incarnivella delavayi)
Hibiscus (Hibiscus moschutos)
Indigo, False (Baptisia australis)
Lilac cranesbill (Geranium himalayense)
Lily-of-the-valley (Convallaria majalis)
Liriope (Liriope spicata)
Moneywort (Lysimachia nummularia)
Pachysandra (Pachysandra terminalis)
Pasqueflower (Anemone pulsatilla)
Plantain lily (Hosta spp.)
Plumbago (Ceratostigma plumbaginoides)
Solomon’s seal (Polygonatum biflorum)
Spiderwort, Virginia (Tradescantia x andersoniana)
Sweet woodruff (Galium odoratum)
Violet, Sweet (Viola odorata)

Edging/Borders/Ground Covers

Ajuga (Ajuga reptans)
Bergenia (Bergenia cordifolia)
Candytuft (Iberis sempervirens)
Cinquefoil (Potentilla nepalensis)
Crocus (Crocus hybrids)
Crocus, Autumn (Colchicum autumnale)
Fescue, Blue (Festuca ovina ‘Glaucia’)
Flax (Linum perenne)
Fleeceflower, Reynoutria (Polygonum cuspidatum var. compactum)
Glory of the snow (*Chionodoxa luciliae*)
Goutweed, Bishop’s (*Aegopodium podagraria ‘Variegatum’*)
Grape hyacinths (*Muscaria albus*)
Hen-and-chickens (*Sempervivum tectorum*)
Lamb’s ear (*Stachys byzantina*)
Lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*)
Liriope (*Liriope spicata*)
Mallow, Poppy (*Callirhoe involucrata*)
Moneywort (*Lysimachia nummularia*)
Pachysandra, Japanese (*Pachysandra terminalis*)
Pasque flower (*Anemone pulsatilla*)
Penstemon (*Penstemon spp.*)
Phlox, Moss (*Phlox subulata*)
Plumbago (*Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*)
Primrose, Missouri (*Oenothera missouriensis*)
Sea pink (*Armeria maritima*)
Sedum (*Sedum spp.*)
Strawberry, Barren (*Waldsteinia fragarioides*)
Squill, Siberian (*Scilla siberica*)
Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*)
Violet, Sweet (*Viola odorata*)
Violet, Horned (*Viola cornuta*)

**Vines**

The species below serve many purposes such as screening and can be grown on trellises, fences, and gazebos.

*Clematis, Jackman* (*Clematis x jackmanii*)
Everlasting Pea (*Lathyrus latifolius*)
Rose, Climbing (*Rosa spp.*)

**Dried Flowers or Showy Fruit**

Below are plants with flowers or fruit that can easily be dried for everlasting arrangements. Other species not listed may be suitable but require much more care for drying and preservation.

Baby’s breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*) - flowers
Blackberry lily (*Belamcanda chinensis*) - seed pods
Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) - seed pods
Chinese lantern plant (*Physalis alkekengi*) - seed pods Gay-feather (*Liatris spp.*) - flowers
Indigo, False (*Baptisia australis*) - seed pods
Money plant (*Lunaria annua*) - seed pods
Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) - flower and seeds
Quaking grass (*Briza media*) - flowers and seeds
Statice (*Limonium latifolium*) - flowers
Thistle, Small globe (*Echinops ritro*) - flowers
Yarrow (*Achillea spp.*) - flowers

Categories above are merely suggestions for placement of perennials. The categories are by no means comprehensive, but rather common uses for the specific plants listed. Check with personnel in your local greenhouse or garden center for additional advice on what plants perform well in your area. Also, bookstores often carry a wide array of books on gardening with perennials.

**Books**

The Cooperative Extension Service is the largest, most successful informal educational organization in the world. It is a nationwide system funded and guided by a partnership of federal, state, and local governments that delivers information to help people help themselves through the land-grant university system.

Extension carries out programs in the broad categories of agriculture, natural resources and environment; family and consumer sciences; 4-H and other youth; and community resource development. Extension staff members live and work among the people they serve to help stimulate and educate Americans to plan ahead and cope with their problems.

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