

# Poinsettias Add A Rainbow Of Color Options To Holiday Décor

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URBANA – With their bright red blooms, Poinsettia's are a holiday tradition, but buyers don't have to limit their selection to one color. This winter, celebrate and decorate with a rainbow of Poinsettias.

[University of Illinois Extension](#) Horticulture Educator [Andrew Holsinger](#) says there are plenty of new hues to choose from.

“Beyond the traditional natural shades of red, there are many other colors that can be sought after when purchasing a Poinsettia,” Holsinger says. “If you are like me, you don’t want to limit your selection to the traditional red.”

A number of natural colors are available including pink, white, yellow, and salmon. Any blue and purple Poinsettias are actually cream-colored varieties that have been spray painted.

Poinsettia’s color comes from bracts which are actually modified leaves. These bracts are prompted to change color in response to shorter winter daylight. While bracts of some varieties of Poinsettia are uniformly colored, others offer patterns that add to the uniqueness of these plants.

Some new and unique varieties to look for are ‘Orange Spice,’ ‘Ice Punch,’ ‘Peppermint Twist,’ ‘Winter Rose,’ ‘Red Winter Rose,’ and ‘Red Glitter.’

Poinsettias are compact plants that when properly cared for have a long-lasting display of color. Keeping them at the ideal temperature of 65°F to 70°F during the day will keep the plants healthy and colors more vibrant. Single plants can be used as a tabletop floral display. A mass display of Poinsettias makes a stunning wave of holiday color.

"After the holidays are over Poinsettias can be kept for the next season," Holsinger says. "To ‘rebloom’ a Poinsettia, bring it inside after summer and provide the proper lighting conditions to trigger the coloring."

Artificially colored plants will not carry over their dyed color.

When choosing plants, select Poinsettias with cyathia that are green-tipped or red-tipped. Instead of the colorful bracts, The cyathia are the true flowers of these plants. The greenish-yellow flowers are clustered at the center of the bracts. The cyathia can be examined when purchasing a Poinsettia to determine freshness and duration of bloom. Plants with yellow cyathia or pollen indicate that the plant is past its prime.

A healthy plant will need an appropriate location. Provide adequate light but not direct sun. Avoid drafts from windows or heating vents. Make sure that adequate drainage is provided. Foil wrappings often foil the success of keeping Poinsettias for the duration of the holiday season since they keep the container from fully draining.

When decorating your home, a fun crafty project can be to paint Poinsettias. Start with a cream-colored variety and obtain a dye suited for floral application. Make sure to protect tabletops when applying special floral spray paints.

Explore more about how to care for Poinsettias with a University of Illinois Extension infosheet at [go.illinois.edu/PoinsettiaCare](https://go.illinois.edu/PoinsettiaCare).

**SOURCE:** [Andrew Holsinger](#), Horticulture Educator, Illinois Extension

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