

To keep cut hydrangeas blue in a vase, start with naturally blue blooms and keep them hydrated, cool, and out of direct sun. Vase water cannot reliably turn pink hydrangeas blue or stop blue flowers from fading as they age.

Start with blue flowers

Choose blooms that already have the shade you want and look fresh. The small individual flowers should feel firm rather than papery or limp, and the stems should be free of obvious damage. Older blooms can still be beautiful, but their colors may already be shifting.

On a growing hydrangea plant, flower color in some varieties is influenced by the availability of aluminum in the soil. Soil acidity affects that availability. Once a stem is cut, changing the acidity of vase water is not a dependable way to change or preserve its color.

White hydrangeas are not simply blue flowers waiting for a treatment. Their color is determined by the variety, so adding anything to the vase will not reliably turn them blue.

Give the stems clean water

Hydrangeas have large flower heads and leaves that can lose water quickly. A clean vase and a fresh cut help the stems take up water as readily as possible. Keeping the flowers hydrated helps them look full, although it cannot prevent the natural aging of their color.

- Wash the vase before filling it with fresh water. A clean container reduces the buildup that can interfere with water uptake.

- Trim the stem ends with clean, sharp shears before arranging. A fresh cut exposes the stem tissue that takes up water.
- Remove leaves that would sit below the waterline. Submerged leaves decay and make the water dirty more quickly.
- Change the water every day or two and rinse the vase. Recut the stems if the ends look damaged or slimy.

If you use flower food, follow the packet directions. It is intended to support vase life, not to dye the blooms blue.

Choose a cool spot

Place the vase away from direct sunlight, heaters, and other sources of heat. Warm conditions encourage water loss, which can leave the flower heads drooping sooner. Strong light can also contribute to fading.

Check the water level daily, especially in a warm room. Hydrangeas can drink a surprising amount, and exposed stem ends cannot draw water. A cool room and a full vase give the flowers a better chance of staying fresh.

Some change in color is normal. Blue petals may soften, fade, or take on green tones as the blooms mature. Good care can slow visible decline, but it cannot hold the original shade indefinitely.

Common questions about blue hydrangeas

Will vinegar keep hydrangeas blue?

There is no reliable reason to add vinegar for color. The flowers developed their shade on the plant, not in the vase.

Can I put alum in the water?

Alum is not needed for routine vase care, and it will not reliably preserve a cut bloom's blue color. Stick with clean water or properly mixed flower food.

Why are my blue flowers turning green?

Some hydrangea blooms develop green tones as they age. The change can be part of their normal development, even with attentive care.

Can a wilted flower recover?

Sometimes. Recut the stem, place it in fresh water, and move the vase to a cool spot. A badly aged bloom may not regain its shape.

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