

## March Dahlia Growing Guide: Taking Cuttings

If you pre-sprouted your tubers last month, March is the month to take cuttings. The benefit of taking cuttings is that you will obtain a clone of your plant. If you haven't seen any sprouts yet on your tuber but are beginning to see maroon buds swelling on your tuber, you are well on your way to getting sprouts but are not quite ready to make a cutting. Hang in there.

Taking cuttings is easy and dahlias are one of the easiest plants to get to root from cuttings. Our March meeting will provide a live demonstration on how to take a cutting, but generally you want to wait until the sprout has at least a set of leaves. Then using a sharp knife that has been sterilized with rubbing alcohol, you cut the sprout off below a node. The node is the area of the sprout where the leaves join the stem. You now have your first cutting.

Dahlia cuttings will wilt quickly once you cut them so immediately stick them into a wet Oasis cube or wet potting soil. Remember to add a label as well. Then cover the cuttings with a humidity dome or a polyethene bag such as a zip-top bag to keep your humidity up. Our members are split in terms of whether rooting powder helps in getting your cuttings to root, so give it a go with and without powder and see what works for you. After potting your cutting, you want to provide bottom heat such as through a soil heating mat as well as some light, and within a few weeks your cutting will have rooted.

If you have an Instagram account, Kristine Albrecht of Santa Cruz Dahlias has a great [video](#) where she demonstrates how she takes cuttings.



*Submitted by Justine Dial and Laura Matz. Adapted from the Puget Sound Dahlia Association.*