

# Cutting Peony Blooms for Storage (Dry Pack)

1. Squeeze the bud. If it feels like a marshmallow cut the stem at a 45 degree angle, about 12 inches long.
2. Remove leaves and side buds.
3. Wrap buds with stems ( up to 5) in waxed paper and place in a plastic bag with the stems sticking out of the bag. Twist plastic bag around stems which will remove excess air and place rubber band near the bottom of the bag. Some of the stem will be hanging out beyond the bag. You can place another rubber band near the bottom of the stems to keep them neat.
4. Place stems in cooler or fridge( laying down on shelf). The colder the temperature the longer they will last. Store between 33-35 F is ideal. Warmer is ok but they won't last as long.

Cutting the blooms at the right stage takes a bit of practice. I have found that it varies between different varieties. Some will need to be more open showing more of the petals and some will need to be more closed. Generally speaking the denser ( more petals) the bloom, the softer the bud should be before cutting. Thus, a double peony bloom should feel like a marshmallow while a single bloom can be cut with a much tighter bud. Doubles will last longer than singles in storage and are preferred in the cut flower trade.

Try to cut stems first thing in the morning. If it is raining you should shake off the excess moisture and dry buds with a paper towel before wrapping.

To rehydrate buds:

1. Take out of cooler day/night before show or event.
2. Recut stems at 45 degree angle.
3. Place stems in tepid water with flower preservative (3 drops bleach and 1 tsp sugar for small vase & 5 drops bleach and 1 tsp sugar for large vase). Allow to open out of direct light.

Have fun experimenting with your blooms! These blooms were in the cooler for 5 weeks.

