

A Florist's Guide to Lilies

A classic flower making a big comeback.

Lilies are among the most recognizable flowers on the market today. For decades, they have been top-selling cut flowers thanks to their long-lasting blooms, year-round availability, and wide variety of fantastic, vibrant colors.

With more than 90 species in the genus *Lilium*, **Asiatic** and **Oriental** hybrids are the most prolifically used in the florist trade. However, there have been new releases and advances in lily breeding that offer options in stem length, flower shape, size, color and scent. New hybrids such as **OT** (a.k.a. Orienpet or Oriental/Trumpet), **LA** (*Longiflorum*/Asiatic) and **LO** (*Longiflorum*/Oriental) hybrids give customers even more choices, making lilies once again one of the most desirable flowers today.

Brush up on your lily knowledge to improve your offerings, compete in the marketplace, and stay current with social media trending flowers.



Lily MEANINGS

In general, lilies symbolize devotion or

purity, but each color also has a special meaning:

- 🌸 **White Lilies:** innocence, modesty and grace
- 🌸 **Yellow Lilies:** happiness, gratitude and healing
- 🌸 **Light Pink Lilies:** elegance, femininity and generosity
- 🌸 **Dark Pink Lilies:** prosperity, abundance and ambition
- 🌸 **Red Lilies:** passion, desire and romance
- 🌸 **Orange Lilies:** confidence, encouragement and wealth



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Quick Guide to the Essential Features of Five Amazing Lilies



ASIATIC LILIES (e.g., *Lilium* 'Orange Art')

Asiatic lilies are the most recognizable due to their array of hues ranging from creamy white to nearly black. They also come in bold reds, warm yellows, hot pinks, soft peaches and multicolored varieties that bring pops of brightness and warmth to any arrangement. Asiatic lilies are known for straight and sturdy stems, high bud counts and brightly spotted blossoms that turn slightly upward. They are available in various shapes, from simple open "bowls" to recurved petals. And—a plus for those who don't like the fragrance—blooms are commonly unscented.

- **Key Features:** Long-lasting, affordable, multiple colors, high availability
- **Best for:** Customers wanting unscented flowers



ORIENTAL LILIES (e.g., *Lilium* 'Tiger Woods')

If customers are looking for fragrance, Oriental lilies are the best option. A fresh bouquet of these can perfume an entire room with magnificent scent. Some Oriental lily hybrids are double, such as the Roselily (for example, *Lilium* 'Captain Romance'). Double lilies are also sterile, meaning no stamen and no staining! The absence of pollen also lengthens the life of the blooms. Oriental lilies can last for weeks in a vase, with buds opening in succession.

- **Key Features:** Blooms can have crisp edging, multicolored petals, mottled speckling, starburst eyes and double blossoms, and they can be stamen free
- **Best for:** Customers wanting scented bouquets featuring large, robust, upright flowers



LA HYBRIDS (e.g., *Lilium* 'Eyeliner')

LA hybrids are the best choice for customers sensitive to strong odors but looking for long vase life. They are a cross between *L. longiflorum* (Easter lilies) and an Asiatic hybrid. They are increasing in popularity due to their larger flower size and position. The flowers are often clustered at the top of the stem, which complements weeping or smaller flower types. The Asiatic traits are responsible for the warmer flower colors and the upright calyces, which cause the flower heads to face upward.

- **Key Features:** Upward and outward-facing trumpet-shaped flowers with a longer vase life
- **Best for:** Anyone wanting large flower size, color options and moderate fragrance



LO HYBRIDS (e.g., *Lilium* 'Vendela')

LO hybrids are the newest addition in lily breeding. Many call them the "holy grail" in the lily world due to their attributes and being relatively rare. The LO hybrids are a cross between *L. longiflorum* (Easter lilies) and an Oriental hybrid. Customers get the best of both worlds—the height of trumpet lilies, with huge flowers (6 to 10 inches in diameter) combined with the bright colors and vibrancy of Orientals. There's a big difference in fragrance because trumpet lilies have a much more delicate fragrance, similar to *Freesia*.

- **Key Features:** Long-lasting vase life, huge flowers
- **Best for:** Customers wanting a delicate fragrance



OT HYBRIDS (a.k.a. Orienpet or Oriental/Trumpet lilies) (e.g., *Lilium* 'Yelloween')

OT hybrids are crosses between Oriental and Trumpet lilies, resulting in exciting color patterns. They have fragrant flowers, with some cultivars having a stronger scent than others. Breeding is extremely involved, and the OT/Orienpets may be difficult to find in normal distribution lines. You may see OT/Orienpet lilies marketed under the name Lily Trees®. Somewhat of a misnomer, "tree" refers to their tall height.

- **Key Features:** Long-lasting, affordable, high availability
- **Best for:** Customers looking for impressive, large, fragrant blooms



FUN FACTS

- ◉ Lilies are available year-round.
- ◉ Remove pollen to prolong bloom time and reducing staining possibilities.
- ◉ Many varieties can last up to 14 days in a vase.
- ◉ A wide range of fragrance intensity to suit all customers' tastes.
- ◉ "Lily" is the most popular flower name for girls.

