



Some Like It Hot: Clematis for Full Sun or South and West Exposures

While “feet in the shade, head in the sun” is, in general, a handy guide to remember, it is just that, a generality. There are a host of clematis native to sunny climates and hybrids needing sun from the ground up to flower well. Few of these are drought-tolerant, however. Assume any will require an average amount of soil moisture during the growing season except as noted. The large-flowered hybrids listed here are “sunfast,” meaning their color will not bleach to white in full sun as long as they have ample water.

Evergreen Clematis

Clematis armandii and its two most common selections, ‘Apple Blossom’ and ‘Snowdrift’ require sun from the ground up if you want them to remain well furnished with foliage on their lower canes. The lower growth will become thick and “trunky” if shaded by surrounding plants or if the upper growth of the clematis becomes too dense, shading its base. This group needs sun from the ground up to flower best.

Small-flowered Species and Hybrids

Most hybrids of *Clematis viticella* and *Clematis tangutica* & *orientalis* require full sun to flower abundantly. *Clematis texensis* and ALL of its hybrids (distinguished by their tulip-shaped blossoms) require full sun from the ground up and appreciate a hot site and gravel mulch (including ‘Gravetye Beauty’, ‘Princess Diana’, Princess Kate™ ‘Zoprika’).

Large-flowered Hybrids

The large-flowered hybrids included here truly flower better in hot positions and resist sun fading. Water these deeply once a week during months with low-rainfall during the growing season. Most double large-flowered hybrids are best grown in full sun. Hybrids and sports of *Clematis florida* appreciate both light and heat (including *C. florida* var. *florida* ‘Sieboldiana’).

‘Allanah’ (red)	‘Kacper’ (violet)
‘Barbara Dibley’ (cerise w/redder bar)	‘Kiri te Kanawa’ (double purple)
‘Comtesse de Bouchaud’ (pink)	‘Lady Betty Balfour’ (purple)
‘Duchess of Edinburgh’ (double white)	‘Madame Baron-Veillard’ (pink)
‘Fairy Blue’ (syn. Crystal Fountain™)	‘Marcelina’ (purple)
‘Fond Memories’ (white w/red edge)	‘Margaret Hunt’ (pink)
‘Gipsy Queen’ (purple)	‘Mrs. N. Thompson’ (purple w/red bar)
‘Guernsey Cream’ (cream)	‘Mrs. Spencer Castle’ (double pink)
‘Henry’ (white)	‘Negritianka’ (violet-purple)
‘Huldine’ (cream)	‘Perle d’Azur’ (periwinkle blue)
‘Iubilienyi-70’ (violet purple)	‘Piilu’ (pink w/darker bar)
‘Jackmanii’ (purple)	Rebecca™ ‘Evipo016’ (red)
Jackmanii Purpurea™ ‘Zojapur’ (purple)	‘Rhapsody’ (bright blue)
Josephine™ ‘Eviyohill’ (double pink)	‘Victoria’ (light violet)
‘Julka’ (purple w/red bar)	Wisley™ ‘Evipo001’ (purple)

Herbaceous Perennial Clematis (non-vining) & Shrubs

The most common herbaceous perennial in the genus is *Clematis integrifolia*. It has many popular, antique, and super-hardy selections and hybrids (‘Alionushka’, ‘Arabella’, *x durandii*, ‘Roguchi’). They all require full sun, and if given time to adapt, may become drought tolerant. With only minor exceptions, such as *Clematis addisonii*, most North American native herbaceous perennial clematis require full sun and sharp drainage. With only one exception (*Clematis urticifolia*), all “shrubby” clematis need full sun and good drainage.

Winter-flowering (Cirrhusa group)

Clematis in this group flower from November through March where they are hardy, appreciate warm sites, and tolerate blasting afternoon sun. Cultivar names: ‘Freckles’, ‘Jingle Bells’, ‘Lansdowne Gem’.