

Store flower bulbs in a secure place your pets cannot enter, using a container that keeps the bulbs out of reach while allowing suitable airflow. Check the storage needs of each kind of bulb, and clean up loose skins and soil before a curious animal finds them.

Choose a secure place

A closed cupboard in a garage, shed, or utility room can work if the conditions suit the bulbs. The important detail is the barrier: a shelf alone may not stop a cat from climbing or a dog from reaching a bag that falls.

Keep the cupboard door closed, and use a latch if your pet can open it. If the storage area is shared with a pet, put the bulbs inside a second secure container. Do not rely on a paper bag or a loose lid to keep an animal out.

Some flower bulbs can make pets ill if chewed or eaten. Tulip, daffodil, and hyacinth bulbs are among those to keep well away from animals. Lily exposure is especially dangerous for cats, so ask your veterinarian for guidance before keeping lilies in a home with cats.

Prepare bulbs for storage

Bulbs do not all need the same treatment. Some are planted soon after purchase, while others can be lifted and stored during dormancy. Follow the instructions for the particular plant rather than assuming every bulb can be kept dry for months.

1. Check the plant name and its storage instructions before putting the bulbs away.
2. Remove loose soil as directed, keeping skins and scraps away from pets.
3. Set aside any bulbs that look damaged or show signs of rot.

4. Put the bulbs into a suitable container and label it with the plant name.
5. Place the container in the secured storage area and clean the work surface and floor.

Pack for the bulbs and the household

For bulbs that need dry storage, a ventilated box or mesh bag may be suitable. Since a pet could tear into either, place it inside a secured cupboard or another pet proof enclosure that still provides the airflow the bulbs need.

Avoid sealing bulbs in an airtight container unless the growing instructions specifically call for it. Trapped moisture can encourage rot. The aim is to protect the bulbs without making them easy for an animal to investigate.

Check the storage area

Look in on stored bulbs periodically. Remove any that are soft, moldy, or rotting, and dispose of them somewhere pets cannot reach. Check that the cupboard latch still closes properly and that no loose material has spilled onto the floor.

After planting, gather empty packets, discarded bulbs, and scraps. A few minutes of tidying can remove things a pet might otherwise carry off or chew.

Questions about bulbs and pets

What if my pet eats a bulb?

Contact a veterinarian or an animal poison control service promptly. Have the plant name and an estimate of the amount eaten ready if you can.

Can I store bulbs in the refrigerator?

Some bulbs need chilling, but requirements vary. Follow the plant instructions and keep bulbs securely separated from pets and food.

Are planted bulbs safe from pets?

Not necessarily. Pets may dig them up, so restrict access to the planting area if digging is a concern.

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