



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Lavandula angustifolia*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Lavender produces gray foliage and purple flowers, although cultivars with pink, blue, lavender or white flowers also exist. Most plants are 2 to 3 feet tall but some cultivars are shorter and more compact. Soft leaves are borne on erect, square, tomentose stems. The plant is a perennial in the northern part of its range but may decline in zone 8 due to the summer heat.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Lavandula angustifolia*

**Pronunciation:** luh-VAN-dyoo-luh an-gus-tif-FOLE-ee-uh

**Common name(s):** Lavender, English Lavender

**Family:** *Labiatae*

**Plant type:** herbaceous; perennial

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5B through 8 (Fig. 1)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** cut flowers; ground cover; mass planting; attracts butterflies

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

### Description

**Height:** 1 to 3 feet

**Spread:** 2 to 3 feet

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** whorled

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** oblong

**Leaf venation:** none, or difficult to see

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches

**Leaf color:** blue or blue-green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** purple

**Flower characteristic:** pleasant fragrance; summer flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** unknown

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** unknown

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** gray/silver

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

### Culture

- Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun
- Soil tolerances:** acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay
- Drought tolerance:**
- Soil salt tolerances:** unknown
- Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

### Other

- Roots:** not applicable
- Winter interest:** no special winter interest
- Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
- Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive
- Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

### Use and Management

The plants grow best in a sunny location in a dry, somewhat infertile soil. Protect the crowns with several inches of mulch during the winter. Plants are more susceptible to winter injury when grown in wet, heavy soil.

Lavenders are widely grown as ornamentals; they are tidy, low-maintenance plants that serve well as borders, knots, in rock gardens, and with roses. They are very sensitive to pH, which should be kept above 6. They can be pruned in early spring.

The oil of lavender is a mainstay in perfumery, and the fragrance is widely used in soaps and cosmetics. Flowers for drying must be harvested before opening. They can then be bound together into aromatic and decorative wands, or incorporated in potpourris or sachets.

Cultivars include: 'Backhouse Purple', 'Bowles Early', 'Folgate', 'Gwendolyn Anley', 'Hidcote', 'Irene Doyle', 'Lodden Blue', 'Mitcham Grey', 'Munstead', 'Rosea', 'Summerland Supreme', 'Twickel Purple'. The cultivar names more or less describe the flower color.

Four-lined plant bug causes round, sunken, brown spots on the leaves. The injury is often mistaken for a disease.

**Pests and Diseases**

Leaf spot infected leaves can be picked off.