

# All About Abutilons

Abutilon is a large genus of flowering plants in the Mallow family. A close relative of Hibiscus, these long glowering evergreen shrubs originating from South America can give you six to seven months of flowering in your garden given the right conditions.

The first question I am nearly always asked is “Are they hardy?”. Well the simple answer is some are much hardier than others.

The hardest groups are the Vitifolium and the Megapotanicum groups.

Abutilon Vitifolium and its hybrids x Suntense are fairly hardy large shrubs given a slightly sheltered well drained site, they should survive most places in the U.K.

The variety Veronica Tennant has gorgeous palest mauve single flowers. They flower mainly late spring to early summer. Of the other groups of Abutilons Abutilon, Megapotanicum and its hybrids are probably the most hardy, given the conditions they should survive about minus eight to ten.

**Abutilon Megapotanicum Variegatum (1)** has red & yellow flowers with Yellow splashed leaves which you either love or loathe. I especially like the varieties “Belgian Flag” & “Big Belle” with their more robust growth and larger flowers. The Megapotanicum Abutilons tend to have a more trailing habit which look good in a container or on a bank,. Regular pinching will produce a more compact shrub. Its hybrids tend to be more upright in growth and include the well-known “Kentish Belle” with veined orange red flowers. **“Ines” (2)** has compact growth with soft yellow flowers.

“Orange hot lava” clear orange with red veining. “Patrick Synge” orange flowers. “x Milleri” a cross with Abutilon “Pictum” apricot / orange flowers & Linda Vista peach, compact 1.5m.

Other large flowered hybrids include :

**Nabob (3) , large deep red**

**Waltz (4) , large yellow flowers.**

**Old Rose Belle (5), rose pink.**

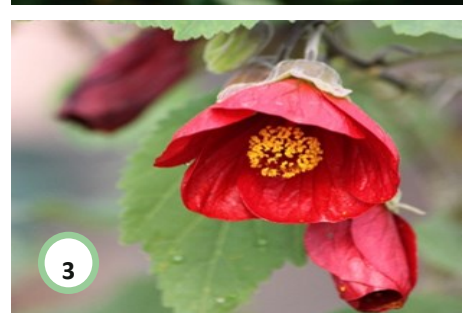
Orange Marion, orange flowers. Snowboy, pure white flowers. These will only stand minus four to five degrees.

All abutilons need a well-drained soil in sun or part shade and a little shelter from extremes of wind & cold. They like to be well fed & watered during the flowering season as they are vigorous plants. Pruning is best done in late spring when the threat of hard frost has passed. Pinch out growing shoots on a regular basis to promote a bushier habit & more flowers.

If growing in a greenhouse or conservatory Abutilons will flower for almost twelve months of the year. But inside are more prone to pests such a whitefly, red spider mite & scale insects.



Gordon Link of  
The Gobbett Nursery



Abutilons are generally very easy to root from semi hardwood cuttings in summer to early autumn. *Abutilon Vitafolium* can also be grown from seed, sown in warmth in early spring, so if you would like an easy to grow evergreen shrub that flowers for month after month, give Abutilons a go.

