
PINCHING*

by Verna Berger

The practice of "pinching" or "stopping", as some refer to it, is very important if you desire your fuchsias to be full and floriferous. I think we have all heard of the term 'tough love', and this is the type of approach necessary when it comes to pinching. One has to be ruthless in removing the new growth tips every couple nodes. Failure to do this will result in a lanky plant with sparse blossoms. An artist I am not, but hope this diagram will give you a visual description to enhance the written directions.



your plants for show, pinching two or three times should give you the desired results. It all depends on how full you would like your plant and the size of the plant when you begin the pinching process. If you propagate your own plants or get them as small starts, you will need to pinch more than if you are starting with a 4" plant that has more than likely been pinched once or twice by that time. Needless to say you wouldn't want to begin pinching at the 2nd or 3rd node from soil level on a 4" plant.

A plant that has been pinched prior to you acquiring it, yet not as full as you would like, can be pinched out at the tips to encourage some extra branching out. Just be sure to pinch evenly all the way around the plant to achieve a shapely Fuchsia.

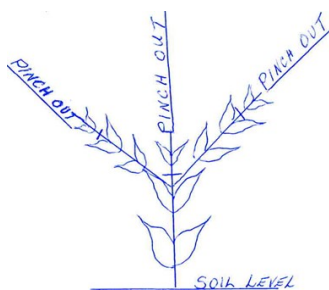
Keep in mind it will take 6 to 8 weeks after the last pinching for a single to produce blossoms, and 8 to 10 weeks for doubles. Add another week or two for Triphyllas. For that reason, I do not pinch Triphyllas more than once, if I even do it once. If you want to pinch your Triphyllas, pinch after every 3rd set of leaves. Hey, I want to enjoy those gorgeous blossoms throughout the season, not spend the season waiting for beauty. Encliandras do not require pinching.

If you would like a tight-er or fuller crown on your trailing Fuchsias, yet are ready to have the outer stems gain some length and begin draping down over your basket, stop pinching those outside stems, but continue pinching those inside closer to the crown. This will give you a nice rounded crown, while enjoying some earlier blossoms on the now longer outside branches.

There is an old cliché: "Fuchsia lovers never bite, they just pinch". True. True. True.

*From the Taffeta Bow Times, April 2016

When starting the pinching process with a newly propagated fuchsia start,



begin counting up the stem from soil level. After the second set of leaves, you will notice the formation of a new set. Pinch, or snip out that new set using a tiny pair of scissors, such as manicure scissors with very sharp points. Your thumb and index finger also will suffice,

just be careful not to damage other leaves. Perhaps that's where the old cliché, "Green Thumb" came from. After pinching a few hundred little tips, your thumb will indeed be green. This "pinching process" should be done uniformly on all sides to ensure a nicely shaped plant. There are some varieties that are very difficult to control and shape as you would like, since they have a mind of their own. Mood Indigo is one that comes to mind as not being the easiest to train and shape; at least the one I owned was very strong willed.

Each place where you pinched or snipped out the new growth, two new sets of leaves will appear in a short time, forming two new shoots. When these new shoots have produced two sets of leaves, again pinch or snip out the tip. You may continue this process several more times. You be the judge. If you are not grooming

