



Trustleaf™ flower drying silica gel



Trustleaf™ flower drying silica gels come in various forms and packaging that all have specific advantages. However all the products perform the same basic use, as a dehumidifier / drying agent than can be used for drying flowers.

The various types of products that we manufacturer are;

White / Orange silica gel crystals – with a bead size of 0.5 – 1mm, the ideal size for drying smaller delicate flowers. Any smaller and the product can be ‘dusty’ and be difficult to remove from the blooms, any larger and it can be difficult to avoid damage to smaller blooms.

White silica gel beads – with a bead size of 2mm -4mm, easier to use, generally the cheapest option, easier to remove from the dried flowers (it doesn’t ‘stick’ as much) much more suited to drying larger more robust flowers.

Orange silica gel beads – with a bead size of 2mm-4mm, easier to use and easier to remove from dried flowers. Has the main advantage that the gel changes from orange to dark green as it absorbs moisture and so indicates when the product has ceased to be effective and needs recharging. The main disadvantage is cost – It is much expensive to manufacture. Which is why it is often provided as a smaller pack that is pre-mixed or can be mixed with the white gel.

Whichever pack you have chosen the methods of drying are basically the same. Seal your flowers in an airtight container with the gel and leave until dry. There are simply too many possibilities and variables when drying flowers to be absolutely specific, but below is a general guide on how to get the best from your product.



Method.

1. Place a layer of the gel crystals / beads in the base of your container.
2. Trim your flowers leaving at least some stem so you can handle the flower when dried.
3. Insert the flowers stem down into the gel leaving some space between each flower.
4. When all flowers have been inserted into the gel gently pour more gel/bead in and around the blooms ideally until completely covered. This is where the smaller crystals have the advantage in that they will not distort or flatten the bloom in the same way the beads can. The more gel you can get as close to the flower as possible the quicker it will dry. However if it is not possible to cover the flower without damage just pour as much of the gel around the flower as you can without covering it. It will still work just take longer to dry.
5. If your product was one that came with a separate indicator pack then place it somewhere in the container, either at one end or tucked down one side. It is helpful if you can see it on the top as it can indicate to some extent how the drying process is working.
6. Seal the container and leave somewhere warm and dry for 5-10 days.

Things that affect the drying time are;

- a. The amount of silica gel in the container, seriously the more the better.
- b. How many times the gel has been used before.
- c. The size and type of flower. Larger flowers can take (much) longer to dry.
- d. The flowers need heat to dry – Keep the container warm to speed up the process.
- e. The gap left in the container, the more unfilled air space the less effective the gel can be.



After a few days say 4-5 for smaller flowers 6-10 for larger. Open the container and very carefully check the petals / leaves for dryness. If still not dry re-seal for another 1-2 days and check again. The process is a bit like baking a cake, you really know you shouldn't open the oven door, but you can't help it. Every time you open the container it takes the gel hours simply to dry out the warm moist air that has been let into the container before the process of drying the flowers can start again.

7. When the flowers are dry, carefully remove them from the container
8. Holding by the stem gently shake the flowers to return the silica gel back to the container. If necessary use a soft brush to remove excess or sticking gel. This is why the beads can be advantageous as they are less likely to stick, and this is why our silica crystals are graded 0.5mm-1mm, any finer and the finer particles can be very difficult to remove.
9. Trim the remaining stem if required.

Notes

- Most smaller flowers can be dried in around 3-5 days
- Use as much of the gel as possible. For example if you have purchased one of our tubs and want to dry just one small flower head simply leave most of the gel at the bottom and place the flower at the top. The deeper the base of gel the more effective and quicker the drying process.
- Try to avoid contact between light coloured petals and the orange silica gel, some discolouration can occur.
- White flowers can become slightly beige, and red flowers can become slight darker when dried. That is simply part of the drying process
- Dried flowers can fade quickly when left in extreme heat so are best kept out of direct sunlight.
- Containers can retain pesticides and chemicals used on the flowers. Once used for drying flowers do not re-use the containers for food use.
- The silica crystals can have the odd fleck and impurities. That is simply part of the manufacturing process because unlike the beads the granular silica is not washed as part of the process. It is not a fault with the product
- If mixed packs with indicator gel have been left for long periods (even if new and unopened) the indicator gel may have turned Green. This is not a fault with the product. The Indicator gel is more effective at absorbing moisture and can draw out even what little moisture remained in the white silica gel. If this happens recharge the gel as shown below



Re-using and re-charging the product

The product can be used many times but eventually the gel has absorbed so much moisture it can absorb no more. If you have purchased a self-indicating product you will be able to see this because the orange gel will have changed to be a dark green colour. When this happens the product can be recharged by gentle drying. The recommended method for drying is to place the product on a tray in an oven on a low heat around 100°C for a couple of hours or until the Dark Green beads turn back to Orange. The time needed will be dependent on the amount of gel and the amount of moisture it contains. You can also use a microwave on a low (or DEFROST) setting for around 20-30 minutes (stirring occasionally) but this is not recommended as it has mixed success.



Recharging only works so many times as the gel becomes slightly less effective after each recharge. Eventually you will need to replace the product.

Warning. The information provided is just a rough guide. We cannot be exact, and cannot be held responsible for adverse results or damage howsoever caused by the use of this product or guidance.

Safety

- While the crystal are graded 0.5mm-1mm some finer dust particles can remain.
- Although the product is non-toxic a mask may be advisable if working in an enclosed space for prolonged periods.
- Keep out of reach of children and pets – This product is not a toy and not suitable for Children under 14 without the supervision of an adult.
- Do not eat.
- Not classified as harmful – No specific safety recommendations
- Inhalation: May cause irritation. Remove patient to fresh air
- Ingestion: May cause discomfort. Drink plenty of water
- Skin contact: May cause dryness. Rinse with water if affected
- Eye contact: Rinse with water for at least 15 minutes
- If any symptoms persist – Seek medical attention

Disclaimer

The information and recommendations in this publication are, to the best of our knowledge, reliable. Users must make their own tests to determine the suitability of these products for their own particular purposes. The company makes no warranty of any kind, expressed or implied, including those of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, other than that the material conforms to its applicable current standard specifications.