

Houseplant Care

Houseplants can be a beautiful addition to a home or office. They are often grown for their attractive foliage and flowers. Plants naturally make us feel good, improve air quality and relieve stress! The key factors for plant growth are light, temperature, humidity, water and fertilizing.

Proper Light

Light is essential for plant growth and can be one of the most limiting factors for success with houseplants. Both the amount and the quality of light are important.

Low Light... North window: a few feet away; East/West window: 3-10 feet away; South window: 15-20 feet away. **Medium (average) Light...** North window: directly in front; East/West window: a few feet away; South window: 3-10 feet away. **High or Bright Light...** East/West window: directly in front; South window: up to 5 feet away. **Direct...** South window: directly in front.

Temperature

Most foliage plants prefer day temperatures between 65 degrees and 75 degrees with night temperatures usually 5 to 10 degrees lower. Avoid extreme temperature changes, such as cold and hot air blasts from windows, radiators, heating and air conditioning vents. Take special care near cold window panes too. Cold glass can damage foliage.

Water Needs

Overwatering tends to be the most common mistake when caring for houseplants. How much water a plant needs is influenced by several factors. Not only is the individual plant size and species important, but also the growing conditions. Light, temperature, humidity, container type, container size, and finally soil type all influence the speed of growth and therefore the amount of water needed. As a general rule apply water when the top 1 to 2 inches of soil are dry. Measure this by pushing the index finger about 1 to 2 inches down into the soil. Soil moisture cannot be determined by sight, except when a plant is wilted.

Humidity

During the winter, most homes have less than 30 percent humidity and some houseplants may suffer. Humidity can be increased with a humidifier or misting them by hand. Setting plants on pebbles in a water-filled tray increases humidity too. Make sure the pots are not sitting directly in water. Another technique is to group plants together which improves the humidity immediately surrounding them.

Fertilizing

Frequency of feeding can vary from every two weeks to every few months during the growing season. A general rule for application frequency is fertilizing at half the recommended strength, every 2 weeks from March to September. Do not fertilize most plants during winter months. Winter's reduced light and temperature result in little or no growth. Most houseplants are dormant during winter. Houseplant fertilizers come in several forms: granular, crystalline, liquid, tablet and spikes. Most houseplant fertilizers are fairly concentrated. Never exceed the recommended application amount. Oftentimes, applications should be even more dilute than recommended. Label recommendations are based on the ideal conditions in greenhouses.

The Top 10 Good Earth Houseplants for Removing Indoor Toxins

1. Palms
2. Ficus
3. Dracaena
4. Philodendron
5. Boston Fern
6. Peace Lily
7. Snake Plant
8. Spider Plant
9. English Ivy
10. Chinese Evergreen

*Did you know...
approximately
fifteen houseplants
can purify a 1,800
square foot home!*