



Houseplant Basics

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Majority of houseplants are from Tropical regions

➤ Light

- Light is required for photosynthesis, intensity depends upon nearness to the light source
- Requirements can vary between full sun, light shade, shade and deep shade
- Maximum distance is 6 feet from a window or minimum of 5,000 lux. Southern exposure best
- Plants require at least 6 hours of dark in 24 hours
- Artificial light - requires mostly blues, some reds
- Most plants bend toward the light so turn plants occasionally for even growth

- Temperature
 - Interior plants do well between 68-75 F
 - In the winter plants enjoy a resting period when temperature, light & moisture requirements are lower



Boston Fern

Watering requirements

- Watering requirements
 - Vary from dry to very moist depending on plant
 - Best to have pots with drainage holes
 - Determine water needs by feeling soil or use moisture meter
 - Roots are in the bottom 2/3
 - Best to water in the morning and use room temperature water
 - Don't let pot sit in water



Maiden Hair Fern

Watering methods

- Three types of watering methods
 - 1) **Top watering** easiest, water close to base, avoid wetting the foliage assure water goes out drain hole
 - 2) **Bottom watering** put water into bottom tray and allow soil to absorb through drainage hole
 - Can have salt accumulation so need to top water to flush every 4-6 months



Variegated Grass

3) **Plunging**

- Submerge pot in water, removes air
- Wait until bubbles stop then allow to drain

Hard water not good
rainwater best or use
de-mineralized water



Parlor Palm

Humidity

- Humidity
 - Affects extent to which plant transpires
 - Ways to increase humidity
 - Grouping of plants
 - Misting around plants early in the day
 - Stone and tray method
 - Humidifiers in the house
 - Washing foliage
 - clears pores of dust
 - Don't put plants near heat registers



Shamrock Plant

- Fertilization
 - 5-10-5 or 20/20/20 is good mix for house plants
 - Liquid / granules added to water / or sticks with slow release formulas
 - Best to have repeated doses of weak solution rather than infrequent strong dose
 - Feed March – September
 - Less frequently during dormant season



Devil's Ivy



Repotting

- Repotting
 - Necessary when roots fill the pot, every year ideal
 - May need to cut roots around root ball with thin, sharp knife or unwind and cut roots that encircle
 - Leave headroom to allow for watering
 - Use clean pot – wash in 1 part bleach / 9 parts water
 - Types of containers – clay, ceramic, plastic, fiberglass, wood, aluminum, copper, etc



Coleus

- Soil
 - Standard potting mix of sterile peat moss, vermiculite or perlite
 - If soluble salts are seen replace top soil & add fresh water until seen coming out drain hole for a few minutes



English Ivy

- Pinching & Pruning
 - Keeps plants compact and full
 - Pinch off growing tip above leaf joint
 - Disbudding to eliminate flowering
 - Remove all spent flowers, dying leaves & dead branches



Peace Lily

Propagating

- Propagating plants depends on the individual plant variety
 - Cuttings – root in water and replant
 - Nice to use rooting agent
 - Can do tip cutting or leaf cutting
 - Crown or root division



Piggy Back Plant

Cultural problems

- Cultural problems
 - No growth or leggy growth – insufficient light
 - Curled leaves – too much light or aphids
 - Brown leaf tips – low humidity or salt build up
 - Pale leaves – too little light or iron shortage

Spider Plant



Insect problems & Diseases

- Insect problems
 - Aphids, whiteflies, red spiders, mites, mealy bugs, Thrips, etc
 - Wash plants with mild soap solution first
- Diseases
 - Botrytis blight, fungus leaf rot, mildew, root rot

Fiscus tree
Weeping fig



Boston fern

- ❑ *Nephrolepis bostoniensis*
- ❑ Best in hanging basket or pot stands
- ❑ Grows 3' high & 5' wide
- ❑ Bright green leaves with drooping 40' fronds
- ❑ Likes moist soil & humidity
- ❑ Mist periodically important
- ❑ Prefers being pot bound
- ❑ Clean out old fronds and dried leaves periodically



Maidenhair Fern

- Adiantum aethiopicum*
- Fan shaped leaflets with lacy look on very slender stalks
- Likes steady moisture and rich soil
- Does not tolerate dry air well likes frequent misting
- Fronds die back briefly in the winter



Parlor Palm

- Chamaedorea elegans*
- Can grow up to 6 ft tall
- Likes to stay moist
- Prefers humidity
- Mist occasionally to clean fronds of dust
- Needs indirect light



- Coleus species
- Regular water
- Strong indirect light
- Likes humidity so mist frequently
- Colorful leaves with interesting foliage
- Pinch stems important to keep compact
- Container can be taken outdoors in the spring



Piggyback plant

- ❑ *Tolmiea menziesii*
- ❑ 4 – 8" high
- ❑ Waxy, shiny dark green heart shaped leaves with scalloped edges
- ❑ Likes lots of light
- ❑ Even moisture with good drainage
- ❑ Moderate humidity so mist while cleaning foliage
- ❑ White flowers occasionally



Devils Ivy

- ❑ Scindapsus pictus
- ❑ Leathery dark green leaves splashed with white or yellow
- ❑ Requires high humidity so mist
- ❑ Loves to send out long runners so pinch back when too long
- ❑ Used in hanging baskets
- ❑ Fun to use as wall decoration – adds to the ☐Solarium look☐



English Ivy

- Hedera helix
- Moderate water
- Green leaves deeply lobed or cleft
- Likes humidity
- Mist leaves periodically
- Good in hanging baskets
- Pinch growing tip to halt the length of growth



Peace Lily

- Spathiphyllum maunaloa*
- Broad bright green waxy leaves that come to point on slender stalks
- Likes high humidity
- Keep soil moist
- Likes extra fertilizer
- Periodic blooms of white bract



Spider Plant

- Chlorophytum comosum
- 1 – 3' tall
- Soft curved leaves
- Best in hanging baskets or elevated pot stands
- Likes light so rotate plant periodically
- Small white flowers on long stalks
- Propagation by rooting plantlets



Weeping fig or Benjamin tree

- Ficus benjamina
- Over 900 species with trees, shrubs, hanging plants, etc
- Can grow to 8' or more
- Likes bright indirect light
- Water evenly
- Clean leaves with damp sponge
- Feed regularly
- Likes to be pot bound
- Drops yellowing leaves in winter



Grasses

- Many species of grasses can be brought in over the winter
- Minimal water required
- Likes light
- Container can be returned outdoors after last frost day



Shamrock

- Oxalis deppei*
- Over 800 species
- Lucky four leaf clover
- Bright green leaves
- Likes sunny location
- Don't over water
- Moderate humidity
- White to pink delicate flowers on long stalks
- Propagated by division



Dieffenbachia

- Dieffenbachia sequine
- Many species
- Likes increased humidity
- Does not like being pot bound
- Semi-shade not full sun
- Water but let dry in between
- Plant leaves contains strychnine!



Christmas cactus

- Schlumbergera bridgesii
- Zygocactus/Rhipsalidopsis
- A succulent
- Withhold water but do not let joints shrivel
- Prefers shade
- High humidity
- Special attention needed to bring about flowering



Any Questions?

Decorating your home with plants





Turn your home into a Solarium



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