



<https://plantshackllc.com>

General Fern Care

Some ferns are outliers and can handle different soil ph ranges, sun amounts, and water amounts however the ferns we sell can be all grown fairly optimally by following these simple guidelines. In our admittedly biased opinion they add a mystical razzle dazzle to a garden well worth a little extra initial preparation and care.

1. Clay soil and excessively rocky soil is a great base to start with. Just mix organic matter in thoroughly to an average shovel depth at about fifty percent existing soil to 50 percent organic matter. Premixed garden soil and or mulch can be purchased for about 5 bucks most places if you don't have compost of your own to mix in.
2. Water- Ferns do not need to be obsessively watered as commonly thought. Water thoroughly weekly or twice a week the first week or two. Then weekly if there is no rain to maintain optimal growth. If left unwatered they often go dormant or exhibit a reduction in number of leaves and quickly come back after water is reintroduced. This is a normal part of their existence so do not panic.
3. Ferns do best in dappled shade. They also love humidity.
4. Cold Hardiness- Some are more cold hardy than others and may be evergreen in areas. Lesser cold hardy varieties may be planted close to the north side of a house or some other shelter.
4. Patience- Like any perennial ferns take a few years to reach maturity, full height, and fullness of the plant. I have ferns still standing that my father planted 30 years ago.
5. Fertilize- Lightly if at all. A very light water soluble fertilizer may be used.
6. Companion plants- Hosta, wild ginger, Dogwood, Azaleas, Japanese Maples, most other understory plants. Just watch as planting with certain thirsty trees may cause the ferns to need more frequent watering for optimal growth.

Use your imagination. Ferns can be planted in logs, shaded rockeries, even fern tables can be built where ferns grow in built in inner planting area with tile or rock edges. Google how to build a fern table for examples.