



Local Leaf Botanica +
Earth Crafts Plant
Care Guide

Plant Care Guide

Let's talk light! What's the difference between direct and bright indirect light?



Light

Direct (bright): Direct light does normally come from the south or west, where the sun is at its strongest during the day. Your plants sitting in west- or south-facing windows will receive more than four hours of strong, unfiltered light. Sun-loving indoor plants include:

- Aloe Vera
- Jade Plant
- Sago Palm (HIGHLY TOXIC)
- African Milk Tree
- Croton
- Ponytail Palm
- Hens and Chicks

Indirect Light: Indirect light can be found in places with an east-facing window, or in an interior of a room that receives full light from a south- or west-facing window. Think of bright indirect light as the light a couple of feet away from an unobstructed window or maybe right at the window if it's coming through gauzy curtains or a window film.

- Succulents (some not all)
- Snake Plants
- Pothos
- Philodendrons
- Fiddle Leaf Fig

Fun Facts!

Plants like philodendrons or pothos will thrive in bright indirect light, and they look great hanging in or near windows, so that's a win-win.

Low (shade): Shady conditions, but some indirect light (less than 3 hours) is welcomed. At home, this kind of light usually comes from a north-facing window, where the least amount of light comes in during the day. If you have east- or west-facing windows, this kind of light will be six to eight feet away from the window, where it is not as strong. At south-facing windows, it's about eight to 12 feet away.

- Ferns
- ZZ Plant
- Ivy
- Calathea
- Prayer Plant
- Dumb Cane
- Dracaena
- Chinese Evergreen's

Plant Facts!

Low light does not mean zero light

Pothos, Philodendrons, and Snake Plants are "low light tolerant" but they do not thrive in these conditions.

Pothos can tolerate fluorescent lights but the plant colors may not be as bright.

For example, a Neon Pothos under fluorescent lights will not be bright green, the green will be dull looking.

Plant Care Guide

Did I over water or under water?



Watering

Low watering needs (drought-tolerant plants): Drought-tolerant plants get watered once every 2-weeks. Over-watering these plants can lead to root rot and eventually kill the plant.

- Succulents
- Ponytail Palm
- Snake Plants
- ZZ Plant
- Living Stones (these can be watered monthly)
- Dracaena

Moderate watering needs: Water these plants once a week or when the first two inches of the soil is dry. It is okay to let the soil dry out some, but they do not need to stay dry for a long period of time.

- Pothos
- Philodendron
- Fiddle Leaf Fig
- Ivy
- Chinese Evergreen

Water-loving plants: Water these plants 2-3 times a week or when the top layer of soil becomes dry.

- Calathea (also loves humidity)
- Prayer Plants (also loves humidity)
- Nerve Plants
- Ferns

Plant Facts!

Place these plants near a humidifier if the conditions in your home are dry. If you have a nice bright bathroom, these plants will do great!

Maintenance

Plants love CONSISTENCY!

Consistency in:

- Frequency of watering
- Temperature
- Feeding of fertilizer
- Amount of watering
- Light
- Humidity

Leaf care: Wipe both sides of the leaves with a soft damp cloth monthly, or put your plants in the shower and let the water from the shower clean the leaves and rehydrate the soil. Prune away leaves that are yellowed, browned, or withering.

Fertilizer:

Generally only needed every 1-2 weeks during the “growing months” = spring and summer.

Some fertilizers we use are:

- Worm Castings (mix in the soil)
- Fish Emulsion (yes, it stinks but works great!)
- Slow-release and liquid varieties can be purchased at local hardware stores.

Plant Care Guide

Plant pests are the worst.



Pests

There are several types of plant pests. Some are a nuisance and cause the plant no harm while others can kill your plant over time. If you begin to notice a lot of leaves on your plant are turning yellow, start checking for pests. Most pests are found on the underside of the leaf.

Common Plant Pests

- Spider Mites (harmful pest)
- Mealybugs (harmful pest)
- Aphids (harmful pest)
- White Flies (harmful pest)
- Scale (harmful pest)
- Fungus Gnats (potentially harmful)

Spider Mites

Spider mites are so tiny that you may not even see them. They look like red specks on the underside of leaves. Once the plant is heavily infested you will notice white silky webs in leaf axils or along veins. The mites suck sap from leaves and cause them to discolor and drop.

Mealy Bugs

Mealybugs are similar to scales; they are sapsuckers, have a waxy coating, and make dew. "Signs of a scale or mealybug infestation can include the presence of waxy deposits on the plant; of black sooty mold.

Aphids

Aphids, another sap-sucking pest, also produce sticky dew. They can attack lots of different plants and are particularly fond of tender, new growth where they cause distortion and wilting. Their life cycle is short (usually two to three weeks long) so populations can increase rapidly.

Whiteflies

These tiny, winged insects have a delicate, powdery white appearance. The immature stage doesn't move much, but the adults flutter about when disturbed. Both stages suck plant sap, but it's the immature stage that causes the most damage, feeding from the underside of leaves.

Scale

Scales are soft-bodied insects that suck plant sap. Tiny crawlers (the immature stage) move a little as they feed. Adults cover themselves in a waxy, protective coating and stay put, so you might not even recognize the small white or brown bumps as bugs. Scales are most likely to be found on the underside of leaves and on stems, although they occasionally appear on the upper leaf surface as well.

Fungus Gnats

Adult fungus gnats don't damage plants or bite people; their presence is primarily considered a nuisance. Larvae, however, when present in large numbers, can damage roots and stunt plant growth, particularly in seedlings and young plants

Plant Care Guide

Let's talk treatment



Pests Continued

Now that we have identified common pests, let's learn how to effectively treat them. There are TONS of pest control options on the market. Since all of these are indoors we want to treat for pests safely. We don't want to expose ourselves, our families, or our pets to harmful chemicals. Here are some "safer" options.

When to treat

Depending on the infestation you will want to retreat every 5-7 days. The goal is to kill adult pests and disrupt the breeding cycle. Some treatments only kill the adults while others kill the adult and the egg.

Peppermint Castile Soap

You can kill the most common, soft-bodied pests such as aphids, mealy bugs, scales, and spider mites with inexpensive homemade insecticidal soap spray.

Mix 1 tablespoon of Castile soap in 1 quart of water, or 5 tablespoons in 1 gallon of water for a larger batch. If the infestation is light, half the amount of Castile soap may be enough to kill the pests and is gentler for plants.

Neem Oil

Neem oil is beneficial to plants and highly effective at killing harmful insects and wiping out fungal disease. Not only does neem oil act as a strong and natural pesticide and fungicide, but it also prevents the issues from coming back. Neem oils kills Aphids, Spider Mites, Mealybugs, Fungus Gants, Whiteflies and Scale. Neem oil can be purchased pre-mixed in a spray bottle or concentrate. If you purchase the concentrate read the label for mixing instructions.

BEE AWARE! Neem oil is harmful to bees so please use extra caution when spraying neem oil on your plants. The best time use Neem Oil is dusk. The oil can burn the plants if the plant is exposed to too much sunlight after being sprayed. And, bee's are in bed at dusk.

Insecticidal Soap

Insecticidal soap is a non-toxic spray that kills small soft-bodied insects such as spider mites, aphids, whiteflies, and mealybugs. The oily soap penetrates the soft outer cell membranes of the insects, causing them to suffocate.

Insecticidal soap can be purchased pre-mixed in a spray bottle.

BEE AWARE! Insecticidal soap isn't labeled as being deadly to bees however please use caution.

Rubbing Alcohol

Rubbing Alcohol is a great way to start treating pests. Rubbing Alcohol will eat away at pests with a waxy outer layer (Scale). Use a Q-tip and rub the alcohol directly on Scale to speed up the treatment process or wet a paper towel with alcohol and clean the undersides of the leaves of the plant. By wiping off the plant with alcohol you are removing adult pests and their eggs. Once the plant has dried you can begin any of the above treatments.

Don't forget!

To avoid reoccurring infestations repot your plants ASAP. If the plant is too stressed to repot begin treatment and repot when the plant begins to perk up.



Use the page below to create a reference guide for your house plants, simply fill in the blanks:

Picture or Plant Tag Here



Plant name: _____

How often does it require watering (& fertilizer):

In the summer: _____

Requirements for:

Light: _____

Temperature: _____

Humidity: _____

Additional notes: _____

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