

Johnson Brothers Greenhouses

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Houseplant Care Sheet

Houseplants offer us the chance to bring the outdoors in, but often times we are unsure what they need and when. This handout is designed to address the common questions asked regarding houseplants. Any questions that are not covered here can be asked of our sales associates; we are here to help you succeed!

Lighting

Most plants that do well as Houseplants require bright light without direct sunlight. Plants with variegated leaves tend to need more light than solid green ones, flowering Houseplants will need more bright light and cacti will need the most. Cast Iron Plant and Philodendrons tend to well in darker situations, while African Violets and Dieffenbachia like filtered, bright light.

Feeding & Watering

Since houseplants cannot grow into areas to find nutrients they rely on you to provide them with everything they need. Houseplants benefit most from low-dose (half-strength) of liquid fertilizer every two weeks. Though houseplants are restricted to the indoors, they do respond to the changing light conditions of the seasons. Because of this, withhold feedings during the late fall and winter months, when plants are relatively inactive, resuming once the daylight hours lengthen in spring. Roots need air as well as water, so try to keep the soil slightly moist, but not wet. Be aware that most houseplants prefer to dry out a little between waterings, refer to individual plant care tips.

Humidity

Most houseplants need additional moisture in the air than most houses can provide. Group plants with thinner, papery leaves separately than those with thicker, leather-like leaves. The thinner-leaved plants generally need more moisture than the thicker ones. To moisten the immediate area around your houseplants, place the pots on a shallow plastic tray of pebbles. Keep water in the tray so that only the very base of the pot touches the water (do not let plants sit in water for any length of time).

Re-potting

Virtually all houseplants crave a loose, lightweight; fairly rich soil mix, one that allows for plenty of air circulation and good water retention. In order to get the proper proportions, the best and easiest way is to use pre-packaged, pre-sterilized soil mix. Choose one that is specifically labeled for houseplants. Most are clean, easy-to-use and relatively inexpensive.

Houseplants will need to be re-potted every year, usually in winter in order to replenish the soil. Whether or not they will require a larger pot is up to you. When you “pop out” your houseplant for its annual re-potting, inspect the roots. If they are tightly constricted, winding around each other and there is not much to the soil except roots, then a larger size and/or possibly, some root pruning maybe in order.

You can restrict the size of a plant somewhat, by root pruning and constricting it to a smaller pot, like Bonsai. Be aware, though, this may not be enough to slow a fast growing plant. If, on the other hand, you want your houseplant to get larger, select the next pot size up and upgrade every time you repot.

Pest Control: *Common pests & their treatments are as follows*

Pest	Symptoms	Organic Treatments for the Home
Aphids	Sticky leaves	Insecticidal Soap OR Handpick them off and squish OR Spray with water to dislodge
Fungus Gnats	Small flying insects around plants/worms in soil	Diatomaceous Earth AND water from underneath AND let plant dry between waterings
Scale	Undersides of leaves have a “bumpy” appearance. May be brown, white, fuzzy or smooth.	Horticultural oil (sprayed outside) OR clean them off by hand with Rubbing Alcohol OR Insecticidal Soap
Spider Mites	Pinholes in leaves/place a white piece of paper under the leaves and tap. Will look like specks of dirt that move.	Insecticidal Soap or Hand wash them off leaves AND increase humidity and clean leaves regularly