

Plant

CARE BOOKLET



KIKKERLAND®

Introduction

In recent years, houseplants have gained popularity as more and more people are adopting them to boost their mental and physical well-being, increase productivity, and enhance the overall look of their living spaces.

Before you buy your own plant, it's a good idea to do a little homework! This guide will start you off on the right path to mastering your green thumb.

Benefits of a Houseplant

Improved air quality

We spend a lot of time indoors, making optimal indoor air quality a top priority. Plants naturally absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen through the process of photosynthesis. They can also absorb and filter out certain pollutants and toxins from the air, creating a healthier breathing environment.

Certain air-purifying species, such as peace lily, dracaenas and snake plant happen to be some of the most tolerant, low-maintenance plants to care of. They can help filter out toxins like formaldehyde, benzene, and trichloroethylene from the air.

Improved air quality can also help you sleep better! Exposure to high levels of oxygen at night can promote deeper, more restorative sleep.

Humidity regulation

Plants release water vapor through a process known as transpiration. This can increase indoor humidity levels, which can be beneficial in dry indoor environments, helping to prevent issues like dry skin and respiratory irritation.

Reduce Allergens

Although not completely understood yet, houseplants can drastically decrease dust and mold in indoor air, reducing some of the most common allergens. According to a recent study, houseplants can reduce dust in indoor air by up to 20%!

Stress reduction

Numerous studies have shown that being around plants and nature can reduce stress levels and improve overall well-being. Studies have found that being in the presence of a plant for less than 20 minutes is enough to make us feel more at peace. Plants both visually

and aromatically can create a calming atmosphere, promoting relaxation and mental wellness.

Noise reduction

Certain plants can help reduce background noise, echo, and reverberation by deflection, absorption, and refraction. Either they bounce and break the sound into other forms of energy, absorb it, or eliminate the echoes, making your living or working space more quiet. The best indoor plants for noise reduction are peace lilies, rubber plants, and weeping figs.

Increased productivity and creativity

Studies have shown that the presence of plants in office or work environments can enhance productivity and focus by 10-15%. Greenery can reduce blood pressure and mental fatigue, causing us to be more relaxed, which in turn helps us be more productive and focused.

Educational and therapeutic value

Plants provide a chance for educational exploration, particularly for children. Caring for plants and witnessing their development can serve as a valuable teaching tool, imparting lessons in responsibility and nurturing abilities. Being involved in gardening or plant-related activities can function as a therapeutic pastime, encouraging relaxation and mindfulness.

They just look nice!

Indoor plants can enhance the visual appeal of your home or workspace. They come in various shapes, sizes, and colors, allowing you to personalize your space and create a more inviting and attractive environment.

Picking the Perfect Plant for You

Before deciding on a houseplant, there are several factors you should consider to ensure the plant not only survives, but thrives in your environment.

Here are some key considerations:

Level of care you can commit to

Some plants are low-maintenance and adaptable to their environment. They won't mind if you forget to water them once in a while and can stay happy in less than ideal light conditions. Other plants like their soil to have just the right amount of moisture and need more frequent watering. Do a little research and select a plant that aligns with your time and commitment level.

Light conditions

Some plants need more light than others, so it's important to assess both

the intensity and the amount of the light in the area where you want to place the plant. Determine the quality and hours of natural light in your space and whether it receives direct sunlight, indirect light, or if it's in a low-light or shady area. It's important to choose plants that will grow in the existing light conditions indoors, but you can also decide to add artificial lights to increase light energy to your plants.

It's also important to keep in mind how the sun changes places in the sky depending on time of day and season, affecting how much light your plant will get. Monitor how the light changes throughout the year and adjust your plants position accordingly.

Space availability

Different plants will thrive in different spots, depending on the amount of space and light available. Consider the available space in your home or office

before buying your plant. Some plants require ample space to grow and spread, while others are more compact. Try to place your plants in a spot with good air circulation, such as near hallways, in front of windows, and on top of tables and not squeezing them in a corner or behind any furniture.

Compatibility with your climate

Consider your climate and the plant's natural habitat. Some plants thrive in specific climates or require specific temperature ranges. For example, if you desire a tropical plant, you'll need to mist them daily to ensure the proper moisture level because most indoor spaces have low humidity due to heating and A/C units drying out the air. If misting your plant everyday sounds like too much work, then you are better off choosing a plant more tolerant to low humidity.

Allergies and toxicity

House plants can make your home feel

like a sanctuary but certain types can lead to symptoms of allergy. If you or anyone in your household has allergies or sensitivities, research the plant's potential for causing allergic reactions. Additionally, if you have children or pets, be cautious about choosing plants that are non-toxic and safe to be around. Common toxic plants and flowers include members of the lily family, aloe, oleander and sago palm.

Maintenance and lifespan

Houseplants have different lifespans and growth habits. An annual plant is one that will take root, flower, produce new seeds, and die within a growing season so you must replant them every year. A perennial plant may flower and produce seeds every year, but they will live for three or more growing seasons.

Skill level and experience

If you're new to gardening or have limited experience with plants, try to

pick one that is more beginner-friendly and are forgiving and resilient. As you gain confidence and expertise, you can gradually venture into more challenging plant varieties like flower types. Beginner houseplants includes pothos, spider plant, ZZ plant and snake plant.

What's important to you

Determine the purpose you want the plant to serve— why do you want a new indoor plant? Do you want it to add visual appeal to a room, clean the air, or provide herbs for cooking? Whatever your motivation, consider the plant's form, color, and foliage to ensure it fits with your aesthetic and serves your intended purpose.

At the end of the day, choose a plant that you genuinely like and connect with. Consider your personal preferences in terms of appearance, scent, or any specific plant species that will make you happy.

Picking the Perfect Plant for Others



January (New Years Day)

Lucky bamboo (*Dracaena sanderiana*) is a resilient and low-maintenance plant that symbolizes good luck, prosperity, and positive energy. As bamboo can grow fast, so should your good luck and fortune for the upcoming year.



February (Valentine's Day)

Red roses aren't for everybody! Consider the sweetheart hoya (*Hoya kerrii*), a low maintenance, semi-succulent plant with puffy leaves that form a shape of a heart.



March (St. Patrick's Day)

Bring a little luck into your home with the shamrock! The shamrock plant (*Oxalis regnellii*), holds cultural and symbolic significance, particularly in relation to Irish heritage. It represents luck, good fortune, and the arrival of spring.



April (Easter)

Native to Brazilian rainforests, the Easter cactus (*Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri*) is a flowering succulent with vibrant blooms in shades of pink, red, and white. It typically blooms between March until May, making it a perfect gift for the Easter holiday and a colorful addition to any springtime celebration.



May (Mother's Day)

Cut flowers are a traditional Mother's Day gift, but won't last very long. An orchid (*Orchidaceae*) not only displays blooms longer, but the plant itself also lasts many years with the right care. It will remind your mom of this special day all year! With more than 25,000 species, the orchid family is one of the largest plant families with many different unique colors and shapes.



June (Father's Day)

In Eastern culture, the monstera plant (*Monstera deliciosa*) symbolizes honor, respect and longevity. This impressive plant with its iconic Swiss-cheese like leaves is also tolerant of an occasional missed watering, making it ideal for dads on the go.



July

Aloe (*Aloe vera*) is a versatile tropical perennial that offers numerous benefits, including its soothing gel for sunburn relief. Simply cut off one of the outer leaves from the base of the plant and peel off its thick skin to reveal the beneficial aloe gel.



August

Scorching August days can be a challenge for your houseplants sometimes – but not for a cactus! A cactus (*Cactaceae*) can be grown indoors as long as you place it in a spot where they receive at least 4 to 6 hours of daily sunlight and the soil has good drainage.



September

The third week in September is National Indoor Plant week! Celebrate with the striking croton plant (*Codiaeum variegatum*), an easy-to-grow houseplant known for its assorted foliage covered in green, scarlet, orange, and yellow splotches. It makes a great match for your fall decor.



October (Halloween)

Native to subtropical wetlands on the East Coast of the United States, the Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*), as a gift symbolizes intrigue, novelty, and a little bit of spookiness. This perennial flowering plant captures the imagination with its carnivorous eating habit, making it a perfect choice for Halloween or for those who appreciate unique and captivating plants.



November (Thanksgiving)

The Thanksgiving cactus (*Schlumbergera truncata*) is a popular tropical cactus that is sold around the holidays for its gorgeous pink, red, and white flowers. As its common name indicates, the Thanksgiving cactus is known for blooming around Thanksgiving, bringing vibrant color into your home. It's a fitting gift to express gratitude and celebrate the holiday.



December (Christmas)

The poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) is a flowering plant species that was first cultivated by the Aztecs for use in traditional medicine. While considered in ancient times to be symbols of purity, today the red, white, or pink poinsettias symbolize celebration, joy and good wishes— a perfect gift for Christmas and the holidays.

Plant Care for Beginners

Maintaining indoor plants can seem overwhelming at first, but with a little homework and consistency, your new green friends will not only survive, but thrive!

Here are some tips for success:

Tip #1: Don't overwater!

The number one reason most indoor plants don't survive is because of overwatering. New plant owners often think that watering frequently will help the plants grow better, but too much water can prevent the soil from having the chance to dry out—leading to root rot and other issues. Time of year, location of your plant, humidity, type of soil and pot and many other factors can affect the watering timing. To keep it simple, for most plants, the best way to know when it is time to water is to just check the soil.

If it feels moist, don't water, wait a few days and then check again. If the soil feels dry, then water thoroughly!

Tip #2: Choose the right soil

Starting off with the right potting soil can make a real difference for your plant's growth. Some plants prefer well-draining soil, while others require more moisture retention. Most nurseries and big-box stores will have specific soil mixes for palms, succulents, and more. While it may seem easy to pick up the "all purpose soil blend", new plant owners should research the soil preferences of their plants and choose the appropriate soil mix accordingly.

Tip #3: Understand lighting

Like with water, it's important to know how much sunlight your specific plant needs to be happy. Light is crucial for plant growth, and not providing enough light is a common mistake. Placing plants in areas with insufficient light can result

in weak, leggy growth or even plant death. Low light plants are those that can get by with just 2 to 4 hours of indirect light a day. Medium light plants prefer at least 4 to 6 hours of indirect sun a day. And finally, high light plants need 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight per day. If your home doesn't get enough sunlight, then consider getting a low light plant like the spider plant, that will likely do fine even if they receive no direct sunshine.

Tip #4: Fertilize periodically

Fertilizing indoor plants keeps them healthy and helps them to grow strong. Like watering, the amount of fertilization a plant needs depends on its growth rate and age, and the time of year. Most houseplants grow more in spring and summer, so this is the best time to fertilize them. Be careful not to over fertilize! Too much fertilizer can burn their roots and stunt their growth.

Tip #5: Don't neglect the pests

Pests can quickly damage or kill plants if not addressed promptly. Early detection is key to managing pests! Before you bring a plant home from the store, carefully examine all plant parts and containers for insects, webbing, holes and eggs (you may need to use a magnifying lens). If there are already pests on your plants, this problem can be managed using non-chemical methods if the infestation is minor. Wipe leaves with a damp paper towel or physically remove pests with tweezers. If you still have an insect problem, consider using a pesticide (and always follow the label directions).

Tip #6: Repot overgrown plants

When a plant outgrows its current pot, its roots can become crowded and root-bound. This can over time stress the plant and stunt its growth. If the plant's roots are circling the inside of the container, it may be time to repot it!

Choose a pot that is slightly larger than the current one but not excessively so, as too much space can lead to overwatering problems.

Tip #7: Always do the research

Overall, researching a houseplant before bringing it into your home is a crucial step to ensure that the plant is a good fit for your environment, lifestyle, and preferences. It increases the likelihood that the plant will thrive and adds to the overall enjoyment of having houseplants in your living space. Each plant has unique requirements, and understanding those requirements is vital for its well-being and development. Researching plant care guides, consulting gardening resources, and seeking advice from experienced gardeners can help avoid many common mistakes and will keep your plant happy and thriving!



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