



CARING FOR YOUR POINSETTIA

Poinsettias are the ultimate expression of the Holiday Season. This guide will help you succeed at care and maintenance for prolonged enjoyment.

Water: When you get your plant home, either remove the foil wrap entirely or poke holes in the bottom or it so you plant won't sit in standing water. Check the soil moisture every 3-4 days by poking with your finger. Poinsettias prefer to be kept evenly moist (not soggy) so let only soil surface become dry between watering. The environment in every home varies so feeling the soil is the best indicator of when your plant needs water.

Fertilizer: For good color and vigorous growth, begin a regular fertilizing program as soon as your plant gets home. Use 1 Tablespoon of Miracle Gro per gallon of water, every two weeks. Use enough of the solution so that a little comes out the bottom of the pot.

Light: Poinsettias need 4-6 hours of bright, indirect light every day. Place your plant in an eastern window or in a southern or western window with some protection from direct sun (a sheer curtain, an overhang or tree, etc.)

Temperature: Locate your plant away from drafts, radiators and heaters. If your house is heated above 65 degrees at night, place your Poinsettia on the ground or near a window where it's cooler.

Next Year: You can even bring back the bloom and colorful bracts next holiday season by continuing with you regular fertilizing and watering and by following these simple steps. You can keep the plant outdoors spring through fall in part shade if you choose.

- 1) **St. Patrick's Day** – Cut stems back to 6" or so leaving 3 nodes (place where leaves join the stem) per stem.
- 2) **Memorial Day** – Repot if necessary into a pot 2" larger in diameter and pinch stem tips to encourage bushiness.
- 3) **July 4th** – Pinch tips back again.
- 4) **Labor Day** – Move plant back indoors if it has been out, check for insects (bring a sample if you see any), and keep it in 4-6 hours of direct sun a day.

- 5) **Columbus Day** – Your plant now needs 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness every day for 10 weeks or so. Place plant in closet or cover with a cardboard box from 6pm – 8am daily. Move back into bright light after colorful bracts have developed and enjoy!