

Tropicals

- **General Rules for the Care of Tropical Plants**
- Properly Watering Tropical Plants
- Keeping Humidity and Temperature Levels Just Right
- Providing Proper Light to Tropical Plants
- Choosing the Best Soil
- Fertilizing Tropical Plants



Properly Watering Tropical Plants

- Most tropical plants like soil that stays evenly moist. Some houseplants can tolerate being occasionally under watered, but the number one cause of death for tropical plants is over watering.
- The easiest way to see if your plant needs water is to stick your finger in the soil about an inch. If the soil feels wet, it doesn't need water.
- If you tend to forget watering, there are watering devices you can get to make it easier to water the plants.
- A moisture gauge is a very handy device to have.



Keeping Humidity and Temperature Levels Just Right

- Keeping the humidity level in the area where your plants reside is very important. The plants like it humid, they're from the tropics.
- You can use a humidifier near your plants, or if you wish you can install a whole house humidifier.
- Alternately, you can mist your plants regularly. Don't mist plants that have fuzzy leaves. The fuzz protects the leaves from insects and from certain diseases. Also you want to water these and trailing plants from the bottom to prevent rotting the stems.
- You can also put your plant on a tray of pebbles in water. Make sure the water is below the level of the pebbles. You don't want the roots to sit in water.
- You can get a humidity monitor to keep an eye on the level.
- Tropical plants need warm temperatures between 65F and 85F. When night time temps fall below 50F, they should be brought inside. When in direct sun light and high temps, they will be stressed.



Providing Proper Light to Tropical Plants

- Some tropical plants require little light, while some require bright light.
- If you place a plant that only wants little light in bright light, its leaves will burn and it will die. Other plants, such as Croton and Rubber Tree, will get leggy and lose their lushness.
- If you can't move a light loving plant to a position with more light, you may have to use indoor plant or grow lights.



Choosing the Best Soil

- Most tropical plants will grow just fine in a general purpose potting soil.
- If you tend to overwater your plants, try adding perlite. It has the properties of filtering and draining so water leaves the soil faster.
- If you tend to forget to water your plants, mix peat moss or vermiculite into the potting soil. They help retain moisture in the soil.
- Some plants require special soil, so research your specific plant for the proper soil.
- If you need to adjust the PH of your soil, you can use lime to raise the PH (more alkaline) and sulfur to lower the PH (more acidic).
- A basic soil mix might be 1 part peat moss, 1 part perlite, 1 part vermiculite, 1 part compost, and 1 part sand.



Fertilizing Tropical Plants

- A regular routine of fertilization is part of tropical plant care.
- During the growing season, spring through summer, the plants need fertilizer once a month. During winter months most plants do not need fertilizer, however research your plant for any special needs
- Tropical plant fertilizer is ideal, but general-purpose fertilizer will work fine.
- Organic fertilizers are good for plants that may burn when using chemical varieties. Compost fertilizer is also good.
- Slow release granular fertilizer is another option.



My Tropical Patio









