

SUN FLOWER

A News Letter from Sun & Black Flowers

www.sunandblack.com

WATER AND POT

Plants' food and home!

Plants as said earlier, are great sources of energy. Whatever you give them, they give you back tenfold. Perhaps, you will understand plants when you raise them yourself. In the last issue, we saw indoor plants that needed less sunlight. In this issue, we see a more important aspects of raising healthy, bright and colourful plants--watering and repotting.

K Gokulrajan, CEO of **FLORASCAPE**, Coimbatore gives us tips:

The Right Potting Mix

Different plants require different 'growing media' or 'substrate'. While plants grow in natural soil, indoor plants can grow in 'soilless' or 'non-soil' potting mixes. Regular garden soil is heavy and can act as carrier of certain insects and disease causing germs. Most preferred non-soil substrates for indoor plants are: vermiculite / perlite, soil red, river sand, peat, sphagnum moss, clay and vermi-compost.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. How to maintain Indoor plants
2. Summer Tips

April , 2013

Watering

10

Issue

Water is the elixir of life for all living things. Plants are no exception. How much water a plant would need depends on the climate, age and type of the plant. Too much or too little can kill a plant. Young plants and other plants with smaller root system require frequent watering. Just dig you finger into the soil or substrate for an inch, and if it feels dry, it's time you watered the plant.





Repot every year

An easy and practical way of keeping your plant healthy is to repot it every year. Most people raise their plants in peat-based bagged soil, and that's probably not going to change anytime soon. But for the sake of the plants, repot them. The plants become healthier and brighter.



How to clean a plant

One of the easiest ways of cleaning an indoor plant is to take the plant to the kitchen sink and shower or hose it down. Ensure that the water is lukewarm. Cold or hot water can harm a plant.



If your plants are really grimy, you can spray them with a dilute soapy water mixture and then hose them down. Use about 1/4 t. dish soap per 1 qt. of water.

Small plants that can't handle the force of a spray can be cleaned

by holding the base of the plant at soil level, inverting it into a bucket of water and swishing the leaves about. Watering the soil beforehand will help prevent the soil from falling out when the pot is inverted. You could also wrap plastic wrap around the base of the plant, to contain the soil while cleaning. Again, be sure to use lukewarm water.

Let the plant dry before you move it back.

How frequently do you clean your plants

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Heavy plants

Wipe the leaves of plants that are heavy and cannot be moved. Use a damp cloth. Dust it every time you dust your house. It will prevent from dust accumulating.



Trim and Clean-up Leaves

While you're washing your plants, you can further tidy them by getting rid of dead, brown or yellowing leaves. If the leaf falls loose easily, you can remove it by hand. Otherwise use a scissors. Never pull resistant leaves of a plant.

You can also prune away browned leaf tips, from plants that were left too dry. Carefully cut away just the dry, brown portions. Your plant will look more natural if you follow the natural contour of the leaves when cutting.



Clean the Plant's Pot

You put all this effort into cleaning your plants, you might as well make sure the pots are in shape too.

If salt or minerals have formed a white layer on the outside or on the rim of your flower pot, you should remove the plant and thoroughly clean the pot. Scrub all the salt residue with a stiff brush and rinse the pot well before repotting your plant.

Initially it might sound like a lot of work to keep your houseplants clean, but you'll find that an occasional cleaning is not really that much effort and it will keep your houseplants looking and growing better.

How to know if a plant needs repotting

- Do you see the roots emerging from the surface or the drainage hole on the pot?
- Have the plants stopped growing and become pot-bound?
- Remove the plant from the pot and check the plant. Have the roots coiled up?
- If the answer is yes, repot your plant.



When to Repot a Plant

If your plant has just come home from the garden center, let it adjust to its new environment for a couple weeks before repotting it. Plants are in shock until they get used to new light, temperature, and humidity conditions. If you want to cover up a plain plastic container, put it in a cachepot.

Young, actively growing house plants should be moved into slightly larger pots with fresh potting mix once a year. Repotting house plants that are large, such as ficus, or slow-growing plants can be done every two years or when they seem to outgrow their pots or look top-heavy.

If a plant is thriving, you can assume it is happy in its pot. It's a good idea to repot a plant at the beginning of a period of active growth, usually in spring.



How to Choose a Container

The new pot should be no more than 2 inches wider at the rim -- or 2 inches deeper -- than the old pot.

Why?

Because a pot that is much larger will give the roots too much space to grow into. The top of the plant will not grow until its roots begin to fill the container.

A too-large container will also hold too much water and can cause root rot. Be cautious to choose a container that has drainage holes to allow excess water to escape.

If you're using a new terracotta pot, soak it in water for a few hours before you plant in it. New terra cotta is so dry that it will rob moisture from the soil leaving the plant thirsty.

How to Repot a Plant - Step by Step

Remove the plant from its original pot, turn it on its side and ease the plant gently from the pot. If the plant won't budge, you may have to tap the bottom of the pot on a hard surface to loosen it. Or, slide a trowel or knife around the inside of the pot, taking care not to damage the rootball.



How to Repot a Plant - Step by Step

If the roots are coiled around the bottom, use your fingers to pull them straight. Prune the roots before potting. Pruning will stimulate new root growth and help the plant establish it in its new container.

Partly fill the new container with potting mix. Center the plant in its container, then fill the sides of the plant with additional mix. Tamp it down with your fingers, especially around the sides of the pot.

Water thoroughly to moisten roots and to settle potting mix. Add more mix if needed.



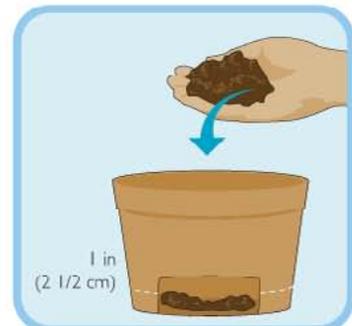
repot a houseplant



Loosen the plant from the pot.



Place a mesh filter over the hole.



Tamp down the soil.



Water settles the roots.

After-Repotting House Plants Care Tips

Plants too feel stress and exhaustion. Repotting house plants can be stressful for them and they need time to recuperate. Here are a few tips to help plants adjust:

Do not expose them to direct sun right away because sun can be too harsh on a weakened plant.

- Keep the soil evenly moist, but not soggy. If you notice that the leaves are limp, the plant is not getting enough water. If the leaves turn yellow, it's getting too much water.

- High humidity sometimes helps a newly repotted plant recover.
- Never fertilize a newly repotted plant. Its roots have likely been cut and can suffer from fertilizer burn. Wait at least a month before fertilizing when its root system is better established.
- People who love plants know that a lot of care is needed to be shown to them. Like us, the plants have lives of their own. They feel, they perceive and they react though differently. Like us, they need space, food and security. And the benefits they shower upon us are immense. They bring us calm, soothe our eyes and can act as hubs of communication between members in the family. They can alert us of dangers, help us relieve our stress.

Summer Tips

- Besides drinking plenty of water, drink a lot of fluids to avoid dehydration. The ever-popular nimbu pani or lemonade is an excellent drink to feel refreshed. If you are cautious of drinking lemonade, then the natural thirst-quencher is tender coconut water. Tender coconut water contains sugar, fiber, and proteins along with vitamins and minerals.
- Eat a lot of salads and fresh fruits that naturally contain water, like water melon – in fact this fruit contains nearly 92% water and up to 14% of vitamin C. This will add to the moisture content that you will lose through sweating. Small amounts of vitamin B and potassium are also found in this fruit.

- Drink water that is stored in earthenware pots. This method is popular in rural India so that they can beat the heat with cool drinking water.
- Pomegranate contains the free radical fighter anthocyanins, which helps fight inner inflammation. Ellagic acid in pomegranate fights sun damage or stops sun spots and photo aging and UV radiation. They have more inflammation fighting property than other super foods that cost twice as much.
- We burn a lot of energy during the summer season. Hence it is important to increase our energy levels by choosing a healthy diet.

Here is the list of foods to be taken in the summer months along with foods that can be avoided in the season to stay healthy and wise

Our Service

- Landscape Design,
- Landscape Consultancy,
- Landscape Construction (Swimming pools, Water features, All types of Natural stone work, Wooden pergola, Gazebo, Drive way, Walkway)
- Landscape Lighting and Irrigation System
- Terrace Garden
- Vertical Garden
- Plants Nursery
- Landscape & Horticultural Maintenance

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