

## Foliage Plants

To determine what plant will do well for you, consider the following:

### Location

Where will the plant go? What height do you want the plant to be? How much light is available? What is the temperature? Is it a hot, cold, or dry area?

### Light

Most important: How much light is there? The light requirements for plants to survive indoors are divided into:

- |                         |                        |   |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---|
| <b>Low light:</b>       | 200-1000 footcandles:  | Just enough natural daylight to read by.                              |
| <b>Moderate light:</b>  | 500-1000 footcandles:  | A well lit room during daylight hours.                                |
| <b>High light:</b>      | 1000-2000 footcandles: | A room with many windows and a lot of sun light.                      |
| <b>Very High Light:</b> | 2000-4000 footcandles: | A room with many large windows and skylights with lots of direct sun. |

**Keep in mind:** Do not count artificial lighting. Light levels will vary from close to the windows as “high” to “low” within 8 feet from the window, even in a south exposure. These are only the minimum required light levels. Bright sunny days in the Pacific Northwest have approximately 12,000 footcandles of light. All plants are able to tolerate much higher light levels as long as the sun does not shine directly on the plants between April 15th and September 15th.

**Note:** Be aware that medium and low light tolerant plants can be very effective in a higher light area, but will not be able to tolerate direct sunlight. They will grow much better and quicker in a well-lit situation, but are quite adaptable to the darker levels.

**According to *Exotica* picture encyclopedia of exotic plants (by A.B. Graf):** Daylight measured 12” away from a north window was 220-500 footcandles; 3’ away was 100-200 footcandles.

Incandescent 75 watt bulb	12” away	150 fc.
Incandescent 150 watt bulb	40” away	60 fc.
Incandescent spot 300 watt	40” away	180 fc.
Fluorescent tube 400 watt	24” away	75 fc.

### Acclimatization

Your plant needs to get used to the light levels in its new location. How well conditioned your new plant is will determine how many leaves it will drop or if leaves discolor. You will probably always encounter some leaf drop/discoloration on some plants until the plant gets used to the new environment. If at all possible, let a low light plant get used to its final place, gradually.

### Watering / Fertilizing

As a general rule it is better to let a plant dry out between watering than to keep it moist all the time. The easiest way to determine if your plant is dry is to feel the soil. Stick your finger into the soil about one inch. If the soil still feels moist do not water. If it is dry, soak the plant thoroughly. It is often easier to place your plant in the kitchen sink or bathtub, soak it thoroughly, let it drain out, and replace it after 10 to 15 minutes.

It is hard to predict how often to water your plants, but here are some guidelines: Small pots: 4”- 6” about 2-7 days; Medium pots: 8” to 10” about 7-10 days; Large pots: 10 to 16” about 10-20 days. Remember that more plants die from too much water rather than too little. During the winter months (September to March) indoor plants do not need to be fertilized. From April to September use a liquid soluble fertilizer about once every 3-4 weeks.

### **Potting / Repotting / Double Potting**

As your indoor foliage plants grow they may benefit from repotting and/or replenishing older soil. Most indoor plants do not need repotting as frequently as you might think. A good rule of thumb for repotting your indoor plant would be if it is out-growing the container height and width, if roots are showing at the top of the soil, or if large roots are poking out of the bottom of the pot. Generally, moving up in pot size by 2”- 4” is plenty. (ie. 6” to 8”, 10” to 12-14”, 14” to 18-20”) Indoor plants like to be a bit pot-bound. This also helps in not over watering them. Changing out your old soil over time will also benefit the indoor plant. Sometimes, just carefully replacing your old soil with new soil is almost as good as repotting, as long as the plant hasn’t outgrown its pot.

Double potting is a term that is used when the original nursery pot is kept on the indoor plant rather than transplanting into a decorative container. This procedure is best when caring for your indoor plants. Keep your newly acquired indoor plant in its original nursery pot and place into the ‘deco’ pot. This ensures that water draining of the plant can occur and be captured in the deco pot without jeopardizing the roots of the indoor plant in the nursery pot. Choose the size of your deco pot or container to be at least 2-4” larger than the pot of the indoor plant so it can just be set inside of the deco pot. This is also good when you set your plant in a bath tub/sink to thoroughly water it. Simply removing it from the deco pot is much easier and healthier for the plant. If you ever need to check the condition of the roots you can just slide off the nursery pot and inspect the soil.

### **Palms**

Do not let your palms get too dry. If too dry, the leaves will turn brown. Palms actually like to be watered regularly. In their native habitat palms thrive in wet, tropical areas.

**Minimum light requirement chart for some foliage plants:**

<b>Low Light Plants</b>	<b>Medium Light Plants</b>	<b>High Light Plants</b>
Aglaonema – Chinese Evergreen	Anthurium	Aeschynanthus – Lipstick Plant
Aspidistra – Cast Iron Plant	Aphelandra – Zebra Plant	Aloe Vera
Calathea	Beaucarnea – Ponytail Palm	Araucaria – Norfolk Island Pine
Cissus – Grape Ivy	Bromeliad	Asparagus sprengeri
Ctenanthe	Caryota – Fishtail Palm	Begonias
Draceana deremensis	Chamaedorea - Palms	Bougainvillea
Draceana massangeana – Corn Plant	Clereodendron	Cacti
Epipremnum – Devil’s Ivy	Cycads – Sago Palm	Chlorophytum – Spider Plant
Howea – Kentia Palm	Dieffenbachia	Cordyline
Maranta	Draceana marginata	Crassula - Jade
Monstera	Draceana warneckii	Croton - Codiaeum
Philodendron (select varieties)	Ficus binnendijkii ‘Alii’	Dizygotheca – False Aralia
Platycerium – Staghorn Fern	Ficus elastica	Episcia – Fringe Flower
Pleomele reflexa	Ficus lyrata	Ficus Benjamina
Podocarpus	Hedera helix - Ivy	Ficus nitida
Sanserveria – Snake Plant	Hoya	Hibiscus
Scindapsis – Devil’s Ivy	Livistona - Palms	Hoya
Stromanthe	Nephtytis	Jasmine
	Orchids	Musa - Banana
	Palms (assorted)	Nephrolepis - Ferns
	Peperomia	Polyscias - Aralia
	Philodendron (select varieties)	Pseuderanthemum
	Phoenix - Palms	Ruellia – Monkey Flower
	Pilea	Sanchezia
	Pteris - Ferns	Sanseveria – Snake Plant
	Saintpaulia – African Violet	Shefflera amate
	Sanseveria - Snake Plant	Strelitsa – Bird of Paradise
	Shefflera arboricola	Succulents
	Spathiphyllum – Peace Lily	Tradescantia – Wandering Jew
	Tillandsia	Yucca