

## 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:

Low light:	200-1000 footcandles:	Just enough natural daylight to read by.
Moderate light:	500-1000 footcandles:	A well-lit room during daylight hours.
High light:	1000-2000 footcandles:	A room with many windows and a lot of sun light.
Very High Light:	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 can 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. You will probably always encounter some leaf drop on some plants until the plant gets used to your home 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.

### **Ficus Benjamina - Weeping Fig**

An excellent indoor tree, but a word of caution: Research has proven that indoor pollution (Mercurium compounds and other gases) can affect the Weeping Fig. New leaves will develop brown edges and fall off. The older leaves will keep dropping. Our own experience has shown that it is not recommended to put Ficus benjamina in newly constructed or newly painted areas unless there is plenty of fresh air. We advise you to wait at least one year so that paint and other materials have time to cure. If you are not sure try a small Ficus benjamina before you buy a large one. Do not confuse the above with regular acclimatization leaf drop which usually occurs with the Weeping Fig. The difference is that the new leaves will stay on the plant.

### **Palms**

Do not let your palms get too dry. If too dry, the leaves will turn brown.

### **Minimum light requirement list for some foliage plants:**

#### **Low Light Plants**

Aglaonema  
Aspidistra  
Bromeliad  
Calathea  
Cissus digitata (Mystic Ivy)  
Cissus rhombifolia  
Ctenanthe  
Draceana 'Janet Craig'  
Draceana massangeana  
Howea (Kentia Palm)  
Ficus elastica  
Maranta (Prayer Plant)  
Philodendron  
Platynerium (Staghorn Fern)  
Pleomele reflexa  
Podocarpus  
Pothos  
Rhapis Palm  
Sanseveria (Snake Plant)

#### **Medium Light Plants**

Beaucarnea (Ponytail Palm)  
Caryota (Fishtail Palm)  
Chamaedorea  
Chinese Fan Palm  
Clereodendron  
Cycads (Sago, Cardboard)  
Dieffenbachia  
Draceana  
Fatsia  
Ficus 'Alii'  
Ficus lyrata  
Hedera helix  
Hoya  
Majesty Palm  
Nephtytis  
Phoenix roebelini  
Sanseveria (Snake Plant)  
Shefflera arboricola  
Spathiphyllum (Peace Lilly)

#### **High Light Plants**

Aeschynanthus (Lipstick Plant)  
Aloe Vera  
Araucaria  
Asparagus fern  
Begonias  
Bougainvillea  
Cacti  
Chlorophytum (Spider Plant)  
Crassula (Jade Plant)  
Croton  
Epescia  
Ficus benjamina  
Ficus nitida  
Ficus Sanseveria  
Hibiscus  
Hoya  
Musa (Banana)  
Nephrolepis (Ferns)  
Ruellia (Monkey Flower)  
Shefflera (Likes cool temps)  
Strelitsa (Bird of Paradise)  
Tradescantia (Wandering Jews)  
Yucca