



GIFT PLANT CARE

Amaryllis

***Hippeastrum* spp.**

- Light:** Bright light
- Water:** Start watering regularly when growth begins. Allow soil surface to dry between waterings.
- Temperature:** Average
- Fertilizer:** No need to fertilize while blooming
- Rebloom:** Remove flowers and stalks after they fade. Place on sunny windowsill and begin fertilizing every month. Place outdoors in spot with morning sun and afternoon shade. Continue to fertilize and monitor watering. Before threat of frost, bring indoors. If foliage is still green, place on windowsill and gradually withhold water until the foliage begins to yellow. After foliage has yellowed, place bulb in its pot in a dark cool area for three to four months. Then replace the top inch of soil with fresh potting soil; place in warm location and begin to water.

Azalea

***Rhododendron* spp.**

- Light:** Bright light away from direct sun while blooming; after blooming, give four hours of direct sun per day.
- Water:** Keep soil evenly moist at all times. Check daily because some azaleas are potted in a very light medium that dries out quickly.
- Temperature:** Cool temperatures (50-60°F) will make flowers last longer. Avoid drafts. After blooming, try to provide temperatures of 45-55°F at night and 68°F or lower during day.
- Fertilizer:** Do not fertilize while in bloom; after flowers fade, fertilize every two weeks with fertilizer for acid-loving plants. Continue to fertilize until late summer.
- Rebloom:** Florist azaleas are not winter hardy in our climate. After blooming, keep in cool room (45-55°F) until all danger of frost has passed, then move outdoors. Provide morning sun and afternoon shade.
- Note:** Pruning should be done immediately following bloom or as spent flowers are removed. Later pruning will remove flower potential for the following season.

Calla Lily

***Zantedeschia* spp.**

- Light:** Bright light indoors. Partial shade to full sun outdoors in summer.
- Water:** Prefers evenly moist soil with room temperature water
- Temperature:** Average household temperatures
- Fertilizer:** Fertilize once a month with a balanced fertilizer (or every 2 weeks with a diluted fertilizer) during the growing season or until the plant stops blooming.
- Rebloom:** Toward the end of summer, allow the plant to rest when the leaves wither and brown. Repot and resume watering after 60 days.
- Note:** If possible, water with distilled water because plants are sensitive to chlorine.

Christmas Cactus

Schlumbergera bridgesii

- Light: Sunny location indoors. Shade or partial shade outdoors in summer.
- Water: Water when soil surface is dry to the touch. Reduce water in winter.
- Temperature: Requires average household temperatures when not trying to trigger bud formation. Cool temperatures will prolong blooms.
- Fertilizer: Fertilize monthly with a diluted balanced houseplant fertilizer while actively growing. Discontinue during winter months.
- Rebloom: To trigger bud formation expose plant to cool temperatures of 50-55°F or provide plants with long nights of approximately 12-14 hours per day.
- Note: Pinching segments off of branch tips will help keep plants bushy.

Chrysanthemum

***Leucanthemum* spp.**

- Light: Sunny locations indoor and out
- Water: Water when dry
- Temperature: Average household temperatures when not in bloom. Cool temperatures will prolong blooms.
- Fertilizer: Fertilization is not necessary.
- Rebloom: Floral chrysanthemums are usually discarded after blooming. Plant perennial chrysanthemums outdoors in the spring after all danger of frost has passed.

Clivia

***Clivia* spp.**

- Light: Bright light
- Water: Water when dry
- Temperature: Cool temperatures will prolong blooms. Place plant outside in summer in part sun.
- Fertilizer: Apply half-strength fertilizer monthly during active growth.
- Rebloom: Clivia needs to be exposed to temperatures near 50°F for at least one month in order to set buds.

Cyclamen

Cyclamen persicum

- Light: Bright light away from direct sun
- Water: Keep soil evenly moist. Do not water center of plant to avoid rotting.
- Temperature: Cool temperatures preferred
- Fertilizer: Apply half-strength fertilizer monthly during active growth.
- Rebloom: Cyclamen is often discarded after initial bloom. Discontinue water when foliage yellows and dries. Place in a cool place for at least two months. When new foliage begins to emerge, resume watering and place plant in a bright location.

Easter Lily

Lilium longiflorum

- Light: Bright light away from direct sunlight
- Water: When in bloom, water when soil surface is dry; reduce water when plant is finished blooming.
- Temperature: Average household temperature
- Fertilizer: Well-balanced fertilizer can be applied after planted outdoors.
- Rebloom: Rebloom difficult indoors; best planted outdoors
- Note: Easter Lilies may be planted outdoors 4-6 inches deep after all danger of frost.

Gardenia

Gardenia jasminoides

- Light: Bright, indirect light
Water: Keep soil evenly moist; reduce water in winter
Temperature: Evening temperature of 60-65°F; 70-75°F daytime temperature
Fertilizer: Fertilize weekly with one-quarter strength fertilizer specifically for acid-loving plants.
Note: Gardenias require high humidity. Mist leaves regularly or place pot on tray filled with pebbles and water. Mist leaves early in the day to allow foliage to dry and avoid fungal problems. Pinch off blooming stem tips after flowering.

Gloxinia

Sinningia speciosa

- Light: Bright light, no direct sun
Water: Keep soil evenly moist at all times. Keep water off of foliage.
Temperature: Average household temperature
Fertilizer: Fertilize monthly while plant is in active growth and blooming.
Rebloom: When plant stops blooming, reduce watering and fertilizing. Allow soil to dry out when the foliage yellows. Repot tuber, keep warm and dry. Foliage should begin to grow shortly thereafter.
Note: Gloxinia requires high humidity. Place pot on tray filled with pebbles and water. Do not spray with water because foliage does not like to be wet.

Hawaiian Plant

Anthurium scherzerianum

- Light: Bright light
Water: Keep soil evenly moist at all times.
Temperature: Average to warm household temperature
Fertilizer: Apply a high phosphorous fertilizer monthly.
Note: Anthuriums require high humidity. Mist leaves regularly or place pot on tray filled with pebbles and water. Mist leaves early in the day to allow foliage to dry and avoid fungal problems.

Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla

- Light: Bright light, no direct sun
Water: Keep soil evenly moist
Temperature: Cool temperatures will prolong blooms.
Fertilizer: Fertilization is not necessary.
Note: Hydrangeas are often discarded after blooming or they can be planted outdoors after all danger of frost has passed. Although *Hydrangea macrophylla* is cold hardy in the Chicago area, they are difficult to rebloom. They produce flower buds on old growth; therefore, they need winter protection and should only be pruned immediately after blooming.

Ivy Topiary

Hedera spp.

- Light: Bright light, no direct sun in summer
Water: Keep soil evenly moist.
Temperature: Cool temperatures are preferred.
Fertilizer: Fertilize once or twice times per year if kept as houseplant.
Note: Ivy requires high humidity and needs frequent misting, especially in the winter. Mist leaves early in the day to allow foliage to dry and avoid fungal problems. Stem tips can be pinched regularly in the active growing season to retain shape.

Kalanchoe

Kalanchoe blossfeldiana

- Light: Some direct sun or very bright light
Water: Allow soil surface to dry between watering.
Temperature: Average household temperatures
Fertilizer: Plants can be fertilized once or twice a year if kept as houseplants.
Rebloom: Plants may require six weeks of 14-hour darkness per day to set buds if they do not bloom naturally.
Note: Terminal stems may be pinched if plants grow leggy.

Norfolk Island Pine

Araucaria heterophylla

- Light: Bright light
Water: Water when soil surface is dry to the touch. Water sparingly in winter.
Temperature: Cool temperatures
Fertilizer: Fertilize mature plants with a well-balanced fertilizer once or twice a year while in active growth.
Note: Norfolk Island Pines require good air circulation in summer and high humidity, especially in the winter. Mist plant early in the day to allow foliage to dry and avoid fungal problems.

Ornamental Pepper

Capsicum annuum

- Light: Some direct sun is required.
Water: Keep soil evenly moist.
Temperature: Cool household temperature will prolong fruit.
Fertilizer: Plants can be fertilized with a well-balanced fertilizer according to product directions when not in fruit.
Note: Plant requires humidity. Mist plants early in the day to allow foliage to dry and avoid fungal problems.

Primrose

Primula acaulis

- Light: Bright light indoors
Water: Keep soil evenly moist.
Temperature: Cool temperatures preferred
Fertilizer: Fertilization is not necessary.
Note: Primrose is usually discarded or planted outdoors after blooming. Plants should be placed in a shady or part sun location with moist soil.

Shamrock

***Oxalis* spp.**

- Light: Bright light
Water: Water when dry
Temperature: Cool temperatures of no warmer than 70°F preferred.
Fertilizer: Fertilize monthly when plants are actively growing.
Rebloom: Foliage will die back and plant will go dormant at least once a year. Reduce water and keep plant cool. After two to three months, resume watering and move plant to a sunny location. New foliage should grow within one to two weeks and bloom shortly thereafter.



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One of the treasures of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County