

POINSETTIA/PRINCETTIA

Euphorbia pulcherrima

With their vibrant red, pink, white, and green foliage, Poinsettias have become a staple of the holiday season, adding a festive touch to any space they occupy. While they are often cherished as temporary decorations, poinsettias can thrive as long-lasting houseplants with the right care and bring the living décor back season after season!

Planting + General Care

Place in **bright indirect light** during growing seasons. A south or west-facing window that gets at least 5-6 hours of light daily would be ideal. Avoid direct sunlight especially in the afternoons as they can burn the foliage. Maintain stable temperatures between 65° and 75° F and avoid drafty areas. Poinsettias prefer being potted in a high-quality potting mix that will drain well and retain some moisture. Always plant in a pot with sufficient drainage to prevent waterlogged soil that can lead to rot.

Poinsettias also prefer higher humidity levels, and to stay moderately moist at all times. Water once the plant has dried about halfway down but be cautious not to overwater. Be sure to water the soil rather than the foliage as this can cause the leaf spot or discoloration to the beautiful leaves.

After the garden's soil warms in late spring, transplant your poinsettia to a partly sunny spot and prune it by one-third. From late September until December 1 (at least 40 days), keep the poinsettia in a room where it will receive 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness nightly, to stimulate it to produce colorful bracts for the holidays. Then display it proudly for all to enjoy. **See chart below.**

Fertilizing

Feed with a balanced, standard houseplant fertilizer every 2-4 weeks according to the label directions during the active growing season (spring and summer months). Reduce fertilization during the fall and winter months.

Propagation

Though it can be a bit tricky, Poinsettias can be propagated through stem cuttings, provided they are at least 4 inches long and have a few leaves attached. Dip the cutting in a rooting hormone and keep it in a humid and brightly lit location with good air circulation until roots form.

Common Problems + Solutions

Overwatering is the most common mistake with poinsettias and the plant will appear droopy and drop leaves as if underwatered when in fact, the soil is probably too wet. Remove dead or brown foliage from the soil line as often as needed to reduce pests and disease. Poinsettias can be affected by common household pests, always inspect new plants before bringing them into your home, and if an infestation occurs, treat them with insecticidal soap or neem oil.

Be aware that poinsettia sap can be irritating to the skin and harmful if ingested, so keep them out of reach of children and pets. Poinsettias are very delicate and can break easily exposing the sap.

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9 Steps for Success with Poinsettias

1. Select plants with green foliage all the way down to the soil line. This is a good indication that the plants have active, healthy roots.
2. Look for plants that have small green buttons (cyathia) in the center of colored bracts. These buttons will eventually develop into little yellow flowers.
3. **When transporting the plants home, make sure they are protected from temperatures below 60°F, chilling causes the leaves to drop.**
4. Place in a room where there is sufficient natural light to read fine print. You should be able to observe a strong shadow with your hand. **Do not place them in direct sunlight.**
5. Water plants thoroughly when you get them home. The entire soil area should be saturated so that water seeps through the drain hole. Remember to discard excess water. Never allow poinsettias to sit in water.
6. Check the plants daily and water only when the soil feels dry to the touch.
7. If you keep curtains drawn during the day to conserve heat, remember that poinsettias must have at least 6 hours of bright indirect light daily to thrive.
8. Keep plants away from drafts, radiators, and hot air registers.
9. To prolong the bright color of bracts, temperatures should be around 70°F, and not drop below 60°F at night.



How to get your Poinsettia to show color season after season:

December	Full bloom- water as needed
February	Color fades, keep near a sunny window and fertilize when 'new' growth appears. Cut stems back to about 8"
June	Repot if necessary. Fertilize according to directions. Continue to water when dry to the touch. Move outside if temperatures do not fall below 50°F. place in light shade
Late August	Take inside. Cut stems back leaving 3-4 leaves per shoot. Sunny window. Water and fertilize at needed
September 20th- December 1st	Keep in light from 8 am to 5 pm. Put in a dark room (complete darkness) from 5 pm to 8 am.

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