

Houseplant Parenting 101

with Paul Thompson

Everyone's Experience is Different

Know your plants and know your space
Understand the environmental factors that affect plant growth
Research and reach out

Light

- Sunlight is FOOD for your plants
- Understand the light in your home
- Measure your light
- Incorporate grow lights
 - Lumens & PAR > wattage
- Low light: slow death for plants
- Moderate light: average indoor light; direct north or a few feet away from east or west window
- Bright Indirect light: northeast or northwest; within 2-3 feet of a window
- Direct light: direct sunlight for 2-5 hours in the AM or PM; east or west or a few feet back from a south facing window
- Full sun: more than 4-5 hours of direct sunlight daily; unshaded south window in summer; cacti and succulents

Potting Soil

- Three main functions
 - Supports the plant
 - Stores water and nutrients
 - Provides air circulation
- Potting mix
 - FoxFarms Ocean Forest, perlite, horticultural charcoal, and fir bark
- Replace every 2-3 years
- Cactus mix is good for cactus/succulents because of the addition of sand

Why Repot?

- New plants may be over fertilized or root bound
- Salt sensitive
- Over potted and under potted plants can be stressed

Water

- Do not feel restricted to a water schedule
- Check your soil first:
 - Use your finger to poke the top 1" of soil surface
 - Use a chopstick
 - Use a moisture meter
 - Lift the pot up to feel the weight
- Consider the season
- Pots with drainage = happy plants

Humidity

- Solution for the dry winter season
- Grouping
- Terrarium
- Humidifier

Common Plant Issues

Pests (fungus gnats, mealybugs, spider mites, aphids)

- Solution of Dr. Bronners tea tree and peppermint castile soap, hydrogen peroxide, isopropyl alcohol and water

Yellowing Leaves

- Overwatering
- Not enough light
- Soil drains poorly and remains wet for too long
- Dying leaf

Brown Leaf Tips

- Too much fertilizer
- Soil remains dry for extended periods of time
- Temperature is too low

Wilting Plant

- Soil is too wet or too dry
- Root rot