

HOME GROUNDS FACT SHEET



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Nassau County



Nassau County
Horticulture Program
East Meadow Farm
832 Merrick Avenue
East Meadow, NY 11554
Phone: 516-565-5265

Ficus

Ficus pumila, (Creeping Fig)

A viney-type plant that clings to walls by roots. Small, dark green leaves are less than one inch long. Keep plant pruned to keep leaves small, otherwise they get very large and leathery. Can be used as a ground cover for tree-like planters (indoors **only**).

Ficus retusa, (Indian Laurel)

An attractive plant with an upright habit - leaves are very smooth, waxy green. Makes a good tub plant. Top can be pruned to keep in bounds.

Ficus lyrata, (Fiddle-Leaf Fig)

Large, irregular-veined, violin-shaped leaves. Ideal for tub plantings.

Ficus benjamina, (Weeping Fig)

Dense growth and drooping habit with shiny, dark-green, pointed leaves. Prune in spring. Good tub plant.

Ficus benjamina, 'Exotica', (Java Fig)

This variety is more graceful and pendulous than the straight species. Tips of the glossy green, leathery foliage twist to create an added interest.

Ficus elastica, (Indian Rubber Plant)

pictured

An attractive plant with a bold, upright habit. Usually grown as a single-stemmed plant. Can be pruned back when young to encourage side shoot development. A monthly cleaning of the large, leathery leaves is advisable.

Ficus elastica varieties

- 'Decora': most common of the rubber plants with heavy leaves of a deep, glossy green; bold in habit; bright red sheath.
- 'Variegata' leaves are light green with white or yellow margins.

■ 'Doescheri' striking range of colors: greens, grays, white and creamy-yellow. Mid-rib and leaf-stalk are pink.

■ 'Rubra' young foliage has maroon-red coloring with a red mid-rib.



Culture:

Plants of the genus *Ficus* thrive best in bright, indirect light. Temperature should not drop below 55°F at night. Keep soil moist but not soggy. Severe drying out can cause the lower leaves to drop. A general potting soil mix can be used. Repot only when plant is pot-bound.

A monthly cleaning of the leaves to keep them free from dust is advisable.

Propagation:

Air-layering.

Problems:

Anthracnose:

Pick off and destroy affected leaves. Avoid wetting the foliage when watering.

Scale, mealybugs and red spider mites:

Contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension for diagnosis and control.

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