

# HOME GROUNDS FACT SHEET



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Nassau County



Horticulture Center  
Demonstration & Community Gardens  
at East Meadow Farm  
832 Merrick Avenue  
East Meadow, NY 11554  
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## Foliage Plants

### 1. Basic Watering

**Water thoroughly and deeply until it runs out the bottom. Empty saucer of excess water. Water again when the surface feels dry to the touch for pots 5" or less in diameter; 1" or more below the surface for larger containers.**

### 2. Temperatures are all for night

**They will rise accordingly about 10° during the daylight hours.**

### 3. Light Requirements

**Low 10 feet or more away from a window - no direct light. Directly in a north window with obstructions. Dull hallways.**

**Medium 4-10 feet away from an east, south or west window. Directly in front of an unobstructed north window. Bright indirect light.**

**High 4 feet or less from unobstructed south, east or west windows. Bright direct light or sunlight.**

***Aglaonema* sp.**  
(Chinese Evergreen)

Low light. Warm temperature (70°). Keep dust off leaves. Can grow directly in water. Propagate easily by cutting stems into pieces. Watch for scale.

***Araucaria heterophylla***  
(Norfolk Island Pine)

High light (turn plant frequently). Prefers cool temperature, but tolerates 65-75°. Do not remove terminal tip. Watch for presence of mites. Accent plant in planters, small or large specimen.

***Asparagus densiflorus***  
Var. Sprengeri  
(Asparagus Fern)

High light. Cool night room temperatures (55-60°). Likes additional humidity. Best as a filler or good for planters. Keep soil evenly moist.

***Aspidistra elatior***  
(Cast-iron Plant)  
(also variegated form)

Low light. Temperature not critical. Keep dust off leaves. Good filler plant in a grouping or small floor specimen.

***Aucuba japonica***  
**"Variegata"**  
(Gold-dust Tree)

Cool room temperatures (55-65°). Needs high to medium light or leaves will be green throughout. Selectively prune specimen plants in March or April. Will tolerate drafts.

***Beaucarnea recurvata***  
(Pony-Tail Palm)

Medium to high light. Low night temperature (55°), but withstands dramatic fluctuations. Fertilize seldom - once or twice yearly. Develops a bulbous, swollen stem base as a water reservoir. Avoid overwatering. Repot infrequently.

***Begonia rex***  
(Rex Begonia)

Medium light. Normal warm room temperature (70°). Water less frequently from November through March. Use a pebble tray for additional humidity, but provide good air circulation. Additional peat in media preferred.

A-1-3A DWM:cms reviewed RT 1/03

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<b><i>Brassaia actinophylla</i></b> (Schefflera)	Medium light. Warm room temperatures (70-75°). Enjoys being pot-bound. Keep leaves free of dust. Accent plant in planters or large specimen. May quickly grow out of scale. Spider mites can frequently be a problem.
<b>Bromeliads</b>	Medium to high bright light. 55-60° night temperatures. Keep central core of leaves filled with water. Use well-drained mix of fiber, bark, etc. Provide basic watering, however, reduce frequency in winter.
<b>Cactus</b>	High, bright, direct light; sandy soil. Allow soil to dry between waterings. Very little water November-March. Dry atmosphere.
<b><i>Calathea Makoyana</i></b> (Peacock Plant)	Plant growth habits and leaf characteristics, as well as cultural requirements, same as described under <i>Maranta</i> .
<b><i>Chamaedorea elegans</i></b> (Parlor or Neanthebella palm)	Low to medium light, normal room temperature (65°). If dry atmosphere and bright sunlight, leaves of most palms will brown. Keep soil barely moist - some humidity will prove beneficial. Repot only when thoroughly root bound. Small specimen or accent plant in planters. Examine periodically for spider mites.
<b><i>Chlorophytum comosum</i></b> (Spider Plant)	Medium light and average house temperatures. Plantlets form from runners making this a spectacular hanging specimen. Short days during fall are necessary to initiate runner formation on stubborn plants. Do not overpot or allow to excessively dry out.
<b><i>Chrysalidocarpus lutescens</i></b> (Areca Palm)	Medium indirect light, normal room temperature. Keep soil barely moist. Repot infrequently (may slow down growth). Grows tall fast and can be pruned back. Most graceful of palms, but intolerant of low light. Examine periodically for spider mites.
<b><i>Cissus rhombifolia</i></b> (Grape Ivy)	Medium light. Easily conditioned to low light situations. Cooler room temperatures (60°) but tolerates higher. Keep leaves free of dust. Avoid overwatering; soil should be kept barely moist. Dry areas should be avoided.
<b><i>Codiaeum</i></b> (Croton)	High light important because it helps retain color in leaves. Keep temperature above 55°. Potting mix should be kept evenly moist. Repot with soil-based mix as needed. Can be propagated by tip cuttings and air-layering. Good as specimen/floor plants. Can be pruned to keep in bounds.
<b><i>Coffea arabica</i></b> (Coffee Tree)	Interesting food plant (coffee bean) to grow. High or bright light, indirect light. A fast grower that may need spring pruning to keep in shape. Accent plant. Fragrant white flowers will produce coffee beans if pollinated. Keep soil barely moist. Normal night temperature (65°).
<b><i>Crassula argentea</i></b> (Jade Plant)	High or medium light. Prefers cool temperature (55-65°.) Avoid overwatering; soil should dry out slightly between waterings. Small pot specimen or accent plant.
<b><i>Cyrtomium falcatum</i></b> (Holly Fern)	Low to medium light. Keep soil barely moist. Cool temperatures preferred (50-55°). A very durable fern with dark green leaflets having toothed edges.
<b><i>Dieffenbachia</i> sp.</b> (Dumb Cane)	Medium to high light, warm indoor temperatures (65-75°). Will not tolerate overwatering. Can be cut back and easily propagated many ways. Accent plant in planters or specimen. Keep away from drafts. It is normal for this plant to lose its lower leaves sporadically. Poisonous to humans and animals.
<b><i>Dizygotheca elegantissima</i></b> (False Aralia)	High light, otherwise will lose lower leaves. Normal room temperature (65°). Grows fast, can be cut back but will not branch unless cut close to soil surface. Accent plant in grouping or specimen. Use a pebble tray for increased humidity. Repot infrequently. Examine for scale and spider mites.
<b><i>Dracaena deremensis</i></b> "Warneckii"	Medium light. Can be conditioned to lower light. Keep soil barely moist. Normal room temperature (60-65° night). Pot in groups of three for use in planters. Examine for spider mites.

<b><i>Dracaena fragrans</i></b> "Massangeana" (Corn Plant)	Culture same as for <i>Dracaena deremensis</i> but it will produce only one side shoot when cut back. Grows fast and very large.
<b><i>Dracaena marginata</i></b>	Medium light. Normal room temperature (60-65° at night). Accent plant. Develops into a large specimen. Rarely branches. Newer plants may have twisted or braided stems for additional interest.
<b><i>Dracaena surculosa</i></b> (Gold-Dust Plant)	Similar culture as for other <i>Dracaenas</i> . Small pot specimen. Withstands neglect.
<b><i>Epipremnum aureum</i></b> (Pothos)	Medium light, but will tolerate lower although loses colorful leaf markings. Warm room temperature (70°). Although a hanging plant, can be trained into many interesting forms, i.e. totems.
<b><i>Fatsia japonica</i></b> (Japanese Aralia)	High light preferred, will tolerate bright indirect light. Prefers cool temperatures (55-65°). Keep leaves free of dust. Wider than high.
<b><i>Ficus benjamina</i></b> (Weeping Fig)	Normal room temperature (65°), medium to high light. Any variation to lower light intensity will trigger leaf drop. Prune selectively in March. Large fast-growing specimen plant that accepts pruning. Avoid fluctuations with watering - keep soil evenly moist.
<b><i>Ficus elastica</i></b> (Rubber Plant)	Medium light. Normal room temperatures. Keep leaves free of dust. Usually doesn't branch unless cut-back (in spring or summer) - develops a strong central terminal.
<b><i>Ficus lyrata</i></b> (Fiddle Leaf Fig)	Normal room temperature (65°). Medium to high light. Do not repot frequently. Large, coarse floor specimen. Keep leaves washed.
<b><i>Fittonia</i> sp.</b> (Nerve Plant)	Low to medium light. Warm room temperatures. Very sensitive to drafts. Provide additional humidity. Good terrarium plant, small and large leaved varieties.
<b><i>Graptopetalum paraguayense</i></b> (Ghost Plant)	A silvery-white leaved succulent. Culture similar to that described for <i>Crassula</i> .
<b><i>Hedera helix</i> vars.</b> (English Ivy)	Prefers high or medium light, but will survive low light. Low temperature (45-55°) discourages mite attack. Syringe frequently to remove dust accumulating on leaves.
<b><i>Howea Forsterana</i></b> (Kentia Palm)	Low light. Cooler room temperatures are best (60°) but easily tolerates higher. Large and slow growing. Excellent specimen as single or multiple plant that drops its lower leaves as it grows. Prefers a pot-bound condition. Do not allow soil to dry out. Be sure to provide for good drainage.
<b><i>Hoya carnosa</i></b> (Wax Plant)	Medium light (may flower if given high light.) Water frequently if flower buds are evident. Warm or cool indoor temperatures. Humidity not necessary. Endless uses, i.e., trailing, totem, dish garden.
<b><i>Kalanchoe tomentosa</i></b> (Panda Plant)	Medium to high light. Normal indoor, low humidity. Temperature not critical. Easy to propagate from leaf or stem cuttings.
<b><i>Maranta leuconeura</i></b> (Prayer Plant)	Medium light. Room temperatures should not be less than 65° and no drafts. Water less frequently in winter, like <i>Peperomia</i> . Additional humidity important. Small pot specimen and good cover in planters.
<b><i>Monstera deliciosa</i></b> (Cut-leaf Philodendron)	Low to medium light. Warm night temperature. Often confused as a large-leaved <i>Philodendron</i> , but <i>Monstera</i> grows more rapidly. In low light the newly emerging leaves remain uncut.
<b><i>Nephrolepis exaltata</i></b> cv. "Bostoniensis" (Boston Fern)	Medium light. Do not let soil dry out between waterings. Prefers cool temperatures. Use pebble tray for humidity. Pot specimen or filler in planters, also in hanging baskets. Enjoys being pot-bound. Observe frequently for mite or scale infestation.

<b><i>Pandanus veitchii</i></b> cv. "Compacta" (Screw Pine)	Medium to low light. Allow to dry out before rewatering. Prefers a warm night temperature 65°. Tolerates unfavorable conditions. Repot infrequently. Be careful of marginal teeth on leaves. Drops aerial roots when mature.
<b><i>Peperomia obtusifolia</i></b> (Baby Rubber plant)	Medium light. 65-70° night temperature, with no sudden fluctuation. Water normally except November to March when this group of plants slows down growth—extend intervals by 1 or 2 days. Small pot specimen, filler in planters or terrariums.
<b><i>Philodendron hastatum</i></b>	Long leaved totem specimen. Requirements similar to <i>Philodendron oxycardium</i> .
<b><i>Philodendron oxycardium</i></b> (Heart leaf Philodendron)	Low to medium light. Warm night temperature (70°). If grown on a totem, try to keep sphagnum moss moist. Never hesitate cutting back. Propagates easily from leaf or tip cuttings. Useful as a hanging or trellis plant, ground cover in planters. One of the most adaptable group of plants.
<b><i>Philodendron Selloum</i></b>	The only common non-climbing philodendron with a wide-spreading habit. Very tolerant of low maintenance. Culture same as that described for <i>Philodendron oxycardium</i> .
<b><i>Phoenix Roebelenii</i></b> (Pygmy Date Palm)	High light. Thrives in normal room temperatures, allow a winter rest period (50-55°). Keep soil evenly moist, but never soggy. Repot every 2-3 years using a mixture of sterilized soil, peatmoss, sand or perlite. Feed regularly. Watch for spines along the main branches.
<b><i>Pilea Cadieriei</i></b> (Aluminum Plant)	Medium to high light. Night temperatures of (65-70°). Pinch out stem tips to encourage bushiness. Small pot specimen and filler in planters. Prefers additional humidity.
<b><i>Pittosporum Tobira</i></b>	High light and low temperature at night. Fertilize infrequently (3-4 times a year) and keep in a pot-bound condition. Easily pruned in spring, if necessary. Tolerant of drafts. Excellent specimen.
<b><i>Plectranthus australis</i></b> (Swedish Ivy)	Medium to high light. Tolerant of low light, but grows leggy. Normal night temperature (55-65°). Pinch back terminal growth to keep full. Do not let soil dry out; keep evenly moist.
<b><i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i></b>	High light. Prefers cooler room temperatures (60-65°) but tolerates warmer. Selectively prune each spring. Use as single-stem tubbed specimen.
<b><i>Pteris</i> sp.</b> (Brake or Table Fern)	Medium to low light, low night temperature (50-55°). Keep soil moist. Repot before becoming pot-bound. Many species and varieties of dwarf ferns highly recommended for their slow growth and adaptability to the home environment.
<b><i>Sansevieria trifasciata</i></b> (Snake Plant)	Low to medium light. Normal room temperatures. Use in dish gardens or as multiple specimens. Over-watering and drafts are the only known problems.
<b><i>Spathiphyllum</i></b>	Low light (will flower in medium light). Provide warm room temperatures and no drafts. Filler plants for planters or small specimen. Never allow the soil to dry excessively. An exceptionally good house plant. Large and small-leaved varieties.
<b><i>Syngonium podophyllum</i></b> (Nephthytis)	Medium light, normal room temperatures. Good small pot plant or filler for planters. Pinch off long stems anytime to induce branching.
<b><i>Tolmiea Menziesii</i></b> (Piggy-back plant)	Medium light. Cool room temperatures. Keep soil surface damper than normal by watering at 1 or 2 day more frequent intervals. Small pot specimen. Plantlets produced at the root bases.
<b><i>Zebrina pendula</i></b> (Wandering Jew)	High light. Warm night temperature (70°). Best used as a hanging plant. Roots easily in water. Variegation fades in insufficient sunlight. Oldest leaves normally die, but in greater frequency and amount with insufficient light and excessive drought.