

Home Grounds Fact Sheet

Care of Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettia, the traditional Christmas flower, is one of the most difficult plants to grow - even for the commercial grower. The problems encountered in growing are many. They include root rot, difficulty in flowering, scale insects, poor nutrition (which causes the leaves to drop) and over or under-watering.

It is difficult for poinsettias to be grown in the home under normal house conditions. Temperatures are generally too high during the winter for the plants to set flowers effectively. However, if you wish to try your hand at carrying over the poinsettia from this year to bloom again next year, here are some pointers that may be helpful to you:

1. Plants that are going to be carried over should be allowed to flower and kept in as good condition as possible before they are dried.
2. After the plants finish flowering, allow them to dry out to encourage dormancy. Then place the potted plants on their sides in a cool, dry cellar until April. The drying should not be so severe as to permit shriveling of the woody stems.
3. Remove the plants from storage in April bring them into the sunlight and keep them watered. Do not allow them to dry out once they have started to grow, but don't over-water them,



*EUPHORBIA
pulcherrima*

either. Prune two or three inches from the end of each stem.

4. The plants should be carried through the summer, either inside or outside, and feed them with a complete fertilizer such as 20-20-20 about once a month. If they are put outside they can be plunged into the soil while in the pot.
5. As fall approaches (September 1) and night temperatures start to go below 65°F, the plants should be moved indoors.
6. Check plants for insects before bringing them indoors.
7. Place the plants in a sunny location in the house with a night temperature of about 65°F and a day temperature of 70-75°F. Keep moist and feed weekly with a 20-20-20 fertilizer (1 teaspoon/gallon).
8. Poinsettias form flower buds when the days are shorter than 12 hours. Beginning October 1, give the plants full sunlight during the day. Protect the plants from light **every** night by placing them in a dark closet between 5 pm and 8 am. Exposure to artificial light will inhibit flowering. After 40 days of this treatment (as slight coloration begins) the plants can be kept in a normally lighted room.
9. Continue to fertilize with the 20-20-20 water soluble fertilizer according to label directions.



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Care of Cyclamen

Cyclamen plants are distinguished for their compact foliage and abundant bloom. The flowers, borne at a level above the leaves, are white or shades and tints of red and pinks. The plants are difficult to maintain in most homes. They require full sun locations during the day and night temperatures of 50°F. The leaves turn yellow quickly and flower buds die if the temperature is too high or light intensity too low. Inadequate moisture also produces adverse effects.

After flowering, withhold water to induce dormancy and store the pot in a cool location until the following June. Repot the corm in a sterilized soil mixture of one part peat moss, one part garden loam and two parts coarse sand. Leave the upper half of the corm exposed to prevent rotting.

Fertilize the plant twice a month with a quarter teaspoon of 5-10-5 fertilizer dissolved in a quart of water. Keep the plant in indirect bright light until mid-September, then expose it to full sunlight at low temperatures for mid-wintering flowering.

