

# Plants

## A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

### Immediate Care and Handling

Unpack and examine your plants immediately upon receipt. Potted plants are shipped wrapped in a plastic bag and cardboard. When you unwrap each plant, be sure to retain the label with the plant's name on it for future reference. If a plant was separated from its pot during shipment, carefully collect all the soil and repot the plant immediately.

Remove any damaged leaves or stems. Check the soil, and water the plants if the soil appears to be dry. Place plants in a well-lighted location, but avoid direct sunlight. New plants need several days to recover from shipping and adjust to their new environment.

### Care and Feeding

The following requirements generally apply to plants purchased from us, but they do not apply to Wisconsin *Fast Plants*®. See our Wisconsin *Fast Plants*® Growing Instructions Set, item #158952, for details. See individual CareSheets for more specific information on carnivorous plants and other plants with special needs.

#### *Light*

Ideally, plants should be maintained in a greenhouse, but placing them near a north-facing window is a good substitute. For artificial light we recommend fluorescent fixtures with cool-white bulbs, plant lights, or full-spectrum bulbs. Fixtures with a combination of fluorescent and incandescent lamps give the best long-term results. Ensure plants receive 12 to 14 hours of light every day.

#### *Temperature*

Most plants do well at normal room temperatures, provided night temperatures do not drop below 16° C (61° F).

#### *Humidity*

Most plants (except cacti and other succulents) require a fairly humid atmosphere (50 to 60% RH). If plants are kept in a classroom or lab, occasionally mist them with an atomizer to keep them moist.

#### *Water*

More plants are killed by overwatering than by anything else. The need for water is not the same for all plants and will fluctuate from day to day. Check the moisture content of each pot before adding water. The soil should be moist but never soggy. Excess water that collects in saucers under pots should be removed to prevent root rot.

#### *Fertilizer*

Pelleted slow-release fertilizers such as Osmocote®, item #159765, are clean, easy to handle, and very effective. One application will last 2 to 3 months.

### Care and feeding

### *Cacti*

Cacti benefit from a rest period during the winter months. Move the plants to a cool place (if possible) and withhold all water for a 2- to 3-month period during the winter. Formation of flower buds takes place during this period. Feed cacti with a slow-release fertilizer at the end of the rest period.

### *Succulents*

Most succulent plants are native to tropical or subtropical regions and require slightly more water than do true cacti. Active growth takes place as long as adequate water and light are available. Succulents do not always require a rest period as cacti do.

## **FAQ's**

### *What are the tiny cottony growths on our plants?*

They are mealybugs, a serious houseplant pest. If there are not too many of them, you can remove them with a cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol. An insecticide will kill a heavier infestation; however, you may have to discard the plants and start over.

### *Why are the stems of our plants rotting?*

This is caused by water-logged soil or water standing in the saucers under the plants. It is seldom possible to recover these plants.

### *Why is our plant dropping its leaves?*

Houseplants tend to drop a few leaves, especially in fall and winter. Increasing humidity and light will help. Be careful, though—if the plant is dropping many leaves or if the leaves are yellowing or browning, you may have overwatered. Leaf tip browning can be caused by too much fertilizer and leaf curling by too much heat.

**Problems?** We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

**Orders and replacements:** 1-800-334-5551 then select Customer Service

**Technical Support and Questions:** [caresheets@carolina.com](mailto:caresheets@carolina.com)



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