

The Happy Houseplant Care Planner

Light, water and simple routines
for plants that actually thrive.

LIGHT · WATER · FEED · REPOT

A care routine + six printable worksheets

STUDIO SAMPLE · GENERAL PLANT-CARE GUIDANCE



Fewer dead plants. More green, calmer care.

Most houseplants are lost to the wrong spot or the wrong watering, not to a lack of love. This planner helps you match plants to your light and check before you water.

University extension advice is refreshingly practical: light is one of the most limiting factors for houseplants, and you should water when a plant needs it, not according to the calendar. [1][2] This planner turns that into a simple routine: map your light, place plants to suit it, check the soil, and keep a few notes so you learn what each plant likes.



By the end, you will have...

A light map of your home, a plant inventory, a watering check routine, a feeding and repotting calendar, a troubleshooting page and notes that make every new plant easier.

How to use this edition

Read pages 4-8 to understand your space. Pages 9-15 cover everyday care. Pages 16-23 cover repotting, safety, troubleshooting and a worked month. Print the worksheets on pages 24-29 and keep the summary on page 30.

A STUDIO SAMPLE, READ THIS FIRST

Created by Forgewick in September 2026 to show the quality of our ebook work. It is general houseplant guidance; plant species differ, so check the care needs of each plant you own. A partner edition is built from the creator's own plant experience, collection and methods.

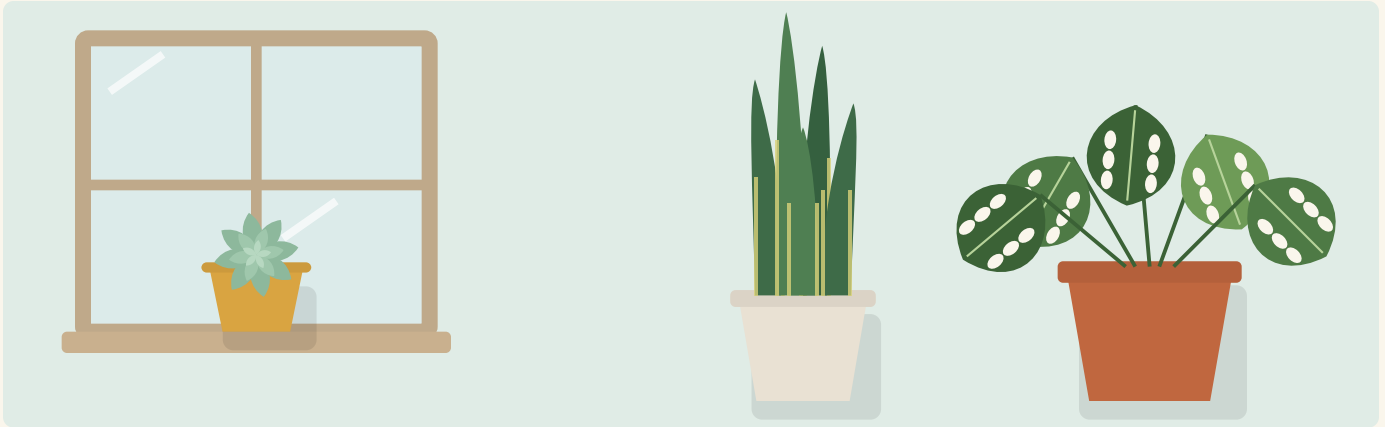
Four sections. One happy plant shelf.

Follow the whole guide, or tap a section to go straight to what you need today.

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- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 01 | Know your space
Light, seasons, temperature and humidity. | 04 |
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- | | | |
|----|--|----|
| 02 | Everyday care
Watering, pots, feeding, cleaning and time away. | 09 |
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| 03 | Grow and fix
Repotting, plant choice, pet safety and troubleshooting. | 16 |
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| 04 | Keep the useful tools
Six printable worksheets and a one-page summary. | 24 |
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-
- The goal is not a perfect jungle. It is plants in the right places, and a routine you can keep.*

Start with your light, not the plant.

Choose plants for the light you have, instead of hoping a plant will adapt.



Illinois Extension calls light one of the most limiting factors for success with houseplants. Most plants do best in bright light, while some tolerate moderate to low light. [1]

01 Walk your home at midday

Note each window's direction and how far your plant spots are from it.

02 Sort spots into low, medium and bright

Use the window guide on page 5 and record it on Worksheet 1.

03 Then choose plants

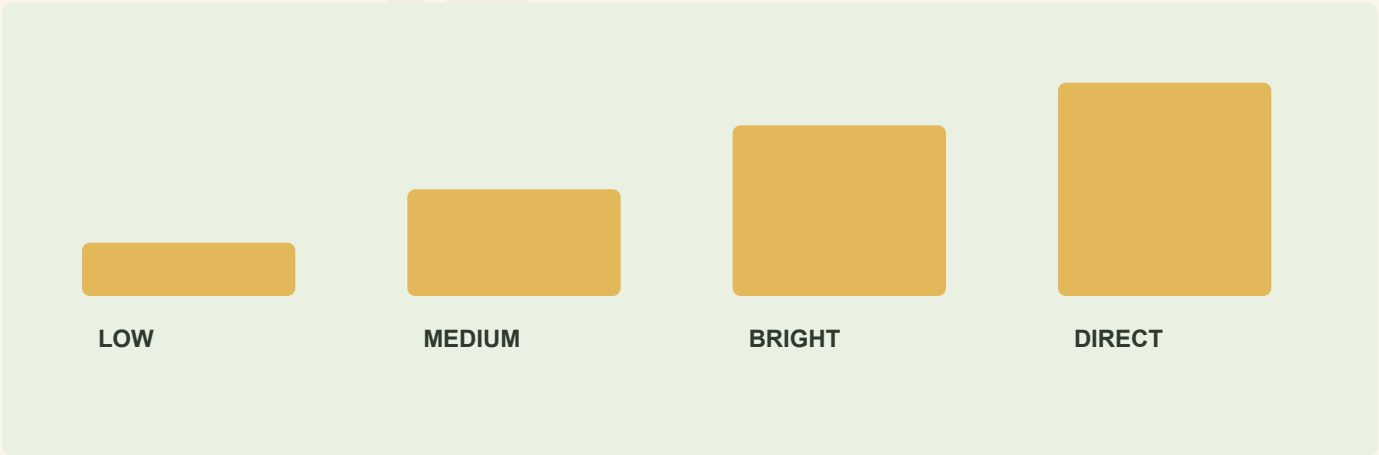
Match each plant's label or care card to a spot, not the other way round.

Read your windows.

A simple guide to light levels, without a light meter.

Light level	Where you will usually find it [1]
Low	A few feet from a north window; 3-10 ft from an east or west window; 15-20 ft from a south window
Medium	Directly in front of a north window; a few feet from an east or west window; 3-10 ft from a south window
Bright	Directly in front of an east or west window; up to 5 ft from a south window
Direct sun	Directly in front of a south window

These directions assume the Northern Hemisphere. In the Southern Hemisphere, swap north and south.



Light changes with the seasons.

A spot that suits a plant in summer may not in winter.

The sun's angle changes through the year, and trees outside can block light in summer and let more in once their leaves fall. [1] Recheck your light map when the seasons turn.

01 Move, don't guess

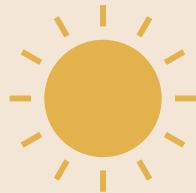
If a plant stretches towards the window or loses its colour, try a brighter spot first.

02 Rotate pots

A quarter turn each time you water keeps growth even.

03 Supplement carefully

Grow lights can help in dim rooms. Illinois Extension suggests 14-16 hours of light is sufficient, and not more than 16 hours, because plants need a rest period. [1]



Keep plants comfortable.

Most common houseplants like the same temperatures people do.

Check	What the guidance says [3]
Daytime temperature	Most foliage plants prefer about 65-75°F (18-24°C).
Night temperature	Usually 5-10 degrees F lower than the day.
Drafts	Avoid hot and cold blasts from windows, radiators, heaters and air-conditioning vents.
Cold glass	Keep leaves off cold window panes in winter; cold glass can damage foliage.

TRY THIS NOW

Stand where your plant stands. If you would feel a draft or cold glass there, move the plant a little further in.

Humidity, simply.

Dry winter air is a common, fixable stress.



01 Know the problem

In winter many homes fall below 30 percent humidity, and some houseplants suffer. [3]

02 Use a pebble tray

Set pots on pebbles in a tray of water, making sure the pots are not sitting directly in the water. [3]

03 Group plants together

Grouping plants raises the humidity immediately around them. [3]

04 Don't rely on misting

Misting only raises humidity briefly, and too much misting can increase disease. [3] A humidifier is more effective.

Water when the plant needs it.

A schedule feels tidy, but plants don't read calendars.

Plant type, temperature, humidity, light, pot size and potting mix all change how fast a plant uses water, which is why a fixed schedule usually doesn't work. [2]



01 Do the finger test

Push a finger about two inches (5 cm) into the soil. If it feels dry, the plant probably needs water. [2]

02 Check often, water sometimes

Look at plants regularly, but only water those that need it.

03 Read wilting carefully

Wilting often means a plant is thirsty, but it can also be a sign of over-watering. Check the soil before you water. [2]

How to water well.

Water thoroughly, then let it drain.

01 Soak the soil

When watering from the top, soak the soil thoroughly. [2]

02 Let it drain, then empty the saucer

Allow excess water to drain into the saucer, then empty it. Do not let pots sit in water. [2]

03 Or water from below

Stand the pot in a few inches of water until moisture reaches the top of the soil, then remove it. [2]

04 Use room-temperature water

Avoid cold water and softened water. [2]



Pots and potting mix.

The pot changes how often you water.

If you have...	Keep in mind
Unglazed clay (terracotta)	Porous; plants in clay usually need water more often than in plastic. [2]
Plastic or glazed pots	Hold moisture longer; check the soil before watering.
No drainage hole	Use it as an outer cover pot with a draining pot inside, and empty any standing water.
Large pot, small plant	More soil stays wet for longer; size up gradually when repotting.



Feeding without overdoing it.

Less is usually more with houseplant fertiliser.

01 Feed only when plants are growing

Fertilise only when plants are actively growing. [3]

02 Keep it occasional

Most houseplants need fertiliser no more than once every 1-3 months between March and September (Northern Hemisphere). [3]

03 Rest in winter

During short winter days plants rest and need very little or no extra fertiliser. [3]

04 Follow the label

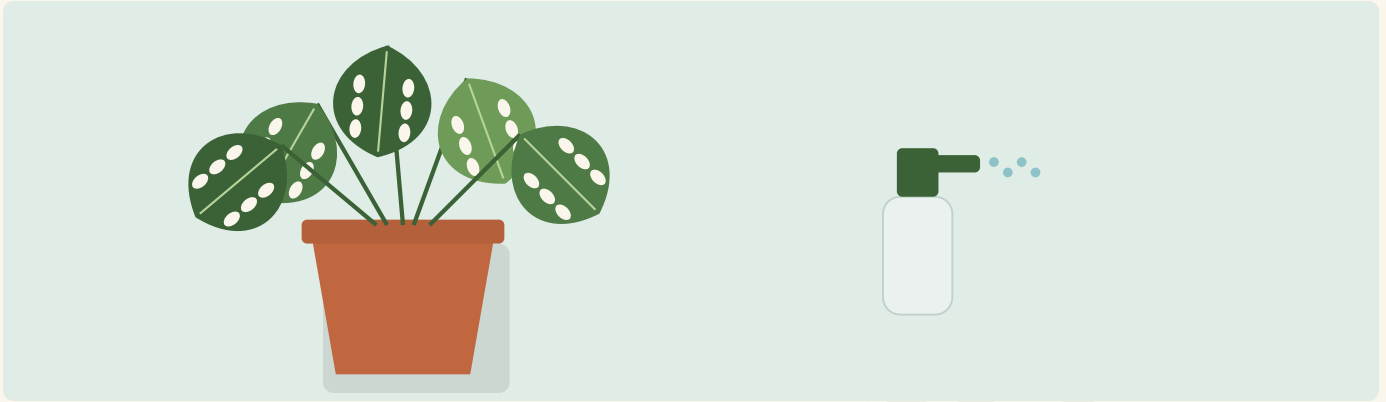
Never mix a stronger solution than the label recommends; too much fertiliser can burn roots. [3]

FLUSH OUT SALTS

Every 4-6 months, pour plenty of plain water through the pot and let it drain completely, then empty the saucer. This helps avoid salt build-up. [3]

Keep leaves clean.

Dusty leaves look dull and catch less light.



01 Wipe gently

Use plain, room-temperature water or a soft, damp cloth. [3]

02 Skip it for fuzzy leaves

Washing or leaf polish is not recommended for plants with hairy leaves. [3]

03 Go easy on polish

If you use leaf polish, use it sparingly and only on firm leaves. [3]

Going away?

A little setup keeps plants happy for a week.

Illinois Extension suggests covering plants with a clear plastic bag large enough to fit each one, then standing them in a shallow pan with pebbles and some water. This setup should last about 7-8 days; for longer trips, ask someone to check on them. [3]

Before you go	Done?
Water plants that need it (finger test)	
Move plants away from hot, sunny windows	
Set up bags and pebble pans for thirsty plants	
Leave notes for your plant-sitter	
Empty any saucers of standing water	

Use Worksheet 2 to leave a plant-by-plant note for a sitter.

Summer outside, back in for autumn.

Many plants enjoy a summer outdoors, with a careful transition.

01 Acclimatise slowly

Start with a few hours outside on the first day and increase the time daily over 1-2 weeks. [3]

02 Avoid direct sun

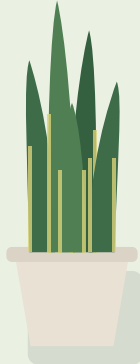
A north-facing spot or the shade of a tree works well. [3]

03 Come in before it gets cold

Bring plants back before temperatures drop, repeating the gradual steps. [3]

04 Inspect and quarantine

Check for insects and disease, and keep returning plants apart from others for 2-3 weeks. [3]



When to repot.

Some plants need it every year; others are happy for years.

Sign [4]	What it means
Roots growing through drainage holes	The pot is filling with roots.
Roots on the soil surface	Roots are looking for space.
Soil mass filled with roots	There is little soil left to hold water.
New leaves smaller than normal	The plant may be running out of room.
Wilting between normal waterings	The soil can no longer hold enough water.

TIMING MATTERS

Repot when the plant is actively growing, typically in spring or early summer. [4]

How to repot, step by step.

Ten minutes, a slightly bigger pot and fresh mix.



01 Ease the plant out

Gently knock the plant out of its pot and look at the roots. [4]

02 Loosen circling roots

Cut or unwind roots that circle the root ball. Scrape away crusty white salt from the top of the soil. [4]

03 Replant at the same depth

Use fresh potting mix, keep the plant at the depth it grew before and press gently around the roots. [4]

04 Water straight away

Water immediately, leaving a little room at the top of the pot for easy watering. [4]

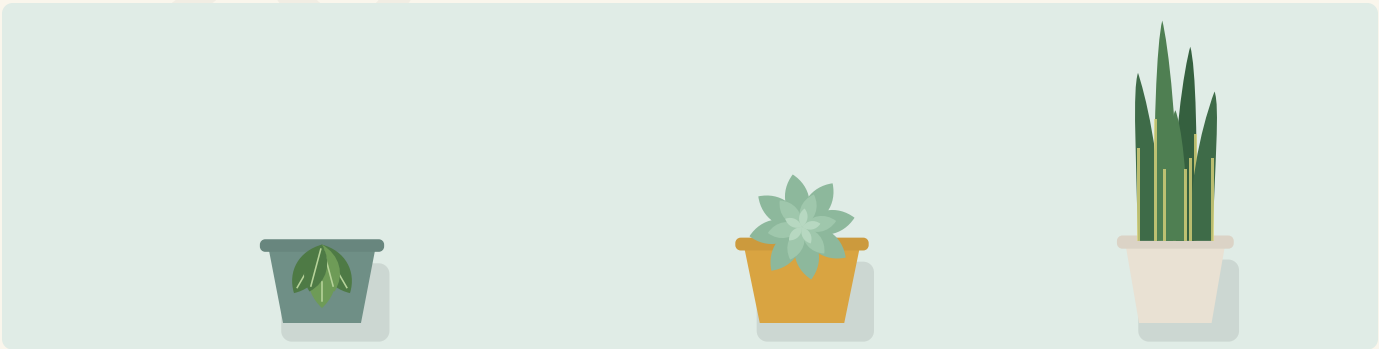
Choose plants for your light.

A few examples from Illinois Extension’s light guide for common houseplants.

Plant	Light it suits [1]
Boston fern	Low
Anthurium	Medium
Begonia	Medium
Bird’s nest fern	Medium
Asparagus fern	Medium
Baby tears	High or bright

Check each plant’s own needs

Care cards and reliable plant databases list light, water and temperature needs. Record them on Worksheet 2 so every plant has its own notes.



Plants, pets and small children.

A quick safety check before you buy.

Some common houseplants can make pets unwell, and the ASPCA notes that eating any plant material may cause vomiting and stomach upset in dogs and cats. [5] Check each plant against a reliable toxicity list, such as the ASPCA's database of toxic and non-toxic plants, before bringing it home.

01 Check before you buy

Look up the plant's common and botanical name.

02 Place with care

Keep plants that may be harmful out of reach of pets and young children.

03 Know who to call

If you think a pet has eaten something poisonous, contact your vet or a pet poison helpline; in the US, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is (888) 426-4435. [5] For children, contact your local poison centre or emergency services.

When something looks wrong.

Notice, check the basics, then change one thing at a time.

You notice	First things to check
Wilting	Soil moisture first: wilting can mean too little or too much water. [2]
Leggy, pale or leaning growth	Too little light; move closer to a window. [1]
Small new leaves, roots escaping	Time to repot. [4]
Crusty white layer on soil	Salt build-up; scrape it off and flush the pot. [3][4]
Crisp leaf edges in winter	Dry air or drafts; try a pebble tray or grouping. [3]
Bugs on returning plants	Inspect and quarantine for 2-3 weeks. [3]

Identify pests or diseases before treating, and follow product labels exactly.

A worked month.

A fictional example of the routine in a small flat. Adapt it; do not copy it.

When	What happens	Worksheet
Week 1	Maps light in each room; moves the fern to a north window and the begonia nearer an east window.	1
Week 1	Lists every plant with its light and water notes.	2
Weekly	Finger-tests soil every few days; waters only the dry ones and empties saucers.	3
Week 3	Notices roots in the drainage holes of the pothos; plans a spring repot.	4
Week 4	Crisp edges on a leaf in dry heating; adds a pebble tray and groups plants.	5
End of month	Reviews notes and adds one plant that suits a bright spot.	6

Fictional teaching example. It does not describe a real home or guaranteed result.

Bringing a new plant home.

A calm start for the plant, and for the rest of your collection.

01 Check the label and your light map

Only buy what suits a spot you actually have. [1]

02 Check pet safety

Look it up before it comes home. [5]

03 Inspect leaves and soil

Look under leaves and at the soil surface for insects.

04 Give it its own spot at first

Keeping new arrivals a little apart for a couple of weeks is a sensible habit, just as Illinois Extension recommends for plants returning indoors. [3]

05 Don't repot straight away

Let it settle unless it clearly needs repotting; spring and early summer are best. [4]

The notes that make you a better plant parent.

Every plant teaches you something. Write it down.

Where each plant is happiest

Your light map plus results tells you the right spot.

How often each plant really needs water

Your log beats any generic schedule. [2]

When you fed and repotted

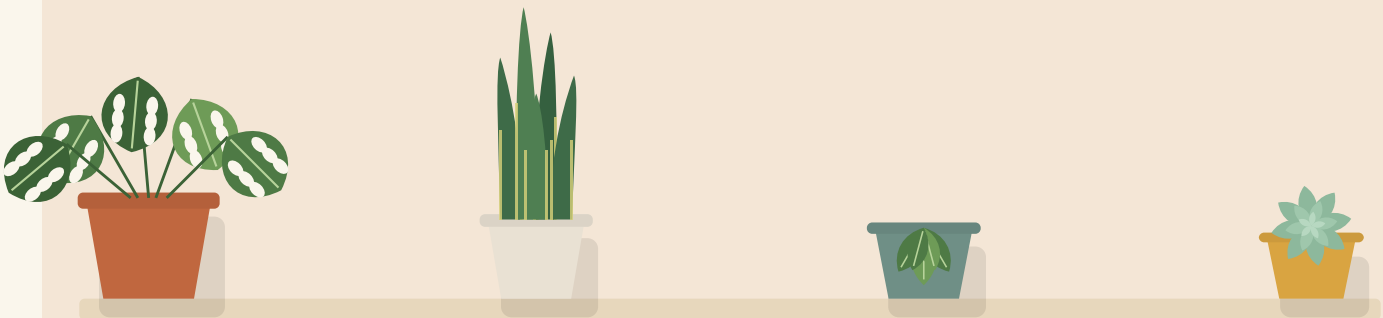
So you never overdo it. [3][4]

What went wrong, and what fixed it

Your own troubleshooting guide.

Your next plant

Chosen for a spot you already know works.



My light map

One line per spot. Recheck when the seasons change. [1]

[illegible]

Low · medium · bright · direct. See page 5.

My plant inventory

Every plant, its needs and what you have learned.

[illegible]

Handy for a plant-sitter too.

Watering check log

Tick when you check; W when you water. Water when the plant needs it. [2]

Plant	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Notes

Finger test to 2 in (5 cm) · soak, drain, empty the saucer.

Feeding + repotting calendar

F = fed · R = repotted · L = leached (flushed). [3][4]

[illegible]

Feed only while plants are actively growing; little or none in winter. [3]

Troubleshooting notes

One change at a time, so you know what worked.

Date	Plant	What I noticed	What I changed	Result

See page 20 for first things to check.

Plant wishlist

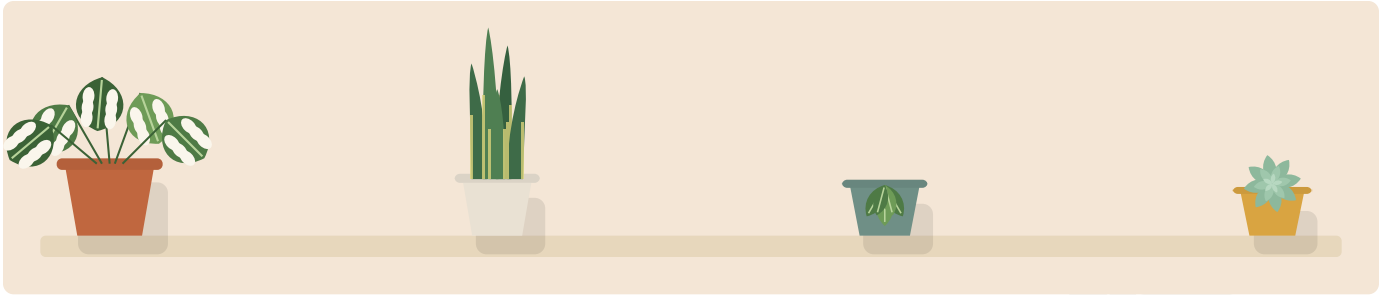
Buy for the spots you have, not the other way round.

Plant	Light it needs	Spot I have for it	Pet safe?	Buy?

Check toxicity before you buy. [5]

Happy houseplants, at a glance.

Stick it on the fridge or save it to your phone.



■ Light first

Map low, medium and bright spots; place plants to suit. [1]

■ Water by need, not calendar

Finger test to 2 in; soak, drain, empty the saucer. [2]

■ Stay comfortable

65-75°F by day; no drafts or cold glass. [3]

■ Humidity

Pebble trays and grouping; misting is short-lived. [3]

■ Feed lightly

Only while growing; little or none in winter; flush salts every 4-6 months. [3]

■ Repot in spring

When roots escape or new leaves shrink; same depth, fresh mix. [4]

■ Pet safety

Check toxicity before you buy. [5]

The useful fine print

Sources behind the specific statements in this studio sample, and what this edition is and is not.

[1] University of Illinois Extension: Houseplants, lighting [Open the source](#)

Light can be one of the most limiting factors for success with houseplants. General guidelines: low light is a few feet from a north window or 3-10 ft from an east/west window; medium light is directly in front of a north window or a few feet from an east/west window; bright light is directly in front of an east/west window or up to 5 ft from a south window. Light changes with the seasons. Supplemental light of 14-16 hours is sufficient; do not exceed 16 hours.

[2] University of Illinois Extension: Houseplants, watering [Open the source](#)

Water when the plant needs it, not according to the calendar. Test the soil with your finger to a depth of two inches; if dry, it probably needs water. Wilting can mean the plant needs water but can also be a symptom of over-watering. Soak the soil, let excess drain to the saucer, then empty the saucer. Unglazed clay pots dry out faster than plastic. Use room-temperature water, not cold or softened water.

[3] University of Illinois Extension: Houseplants, care [Open the source](#)

Most foliage plants prefer 65-75°F by day, 5-10 degrees lower at night; avoid drafts and cold window panes. Winter homes often fall below 30% humidity; pebble trays (pots not sitting in water) and grouping plants help; misting works only briefly. Fertilize only when plants are actively growing, usually no more than once every 1-3 months between March and September; little or none in winter. Leach pots every 4-6 months to avoid salt build-up. Acclimatise plants moved outdoors over 1-2 weeks and quarantine them for 2-3 weeks when they come back in. Clean leaves with room-temperature water or a soft damp cloth.

[4] University of Illinois Extension: Houseplants, repotting [Open the source](#)

Signs a plant needs repotting: roots growing through drainage holes or on the soil surface, soil filled with roots, smaller new leaves, wilting between normal waterings. Repot while actively growing, typically spring or early summer; replant at the same depth in fresh potting mix, press gently and water immediately.

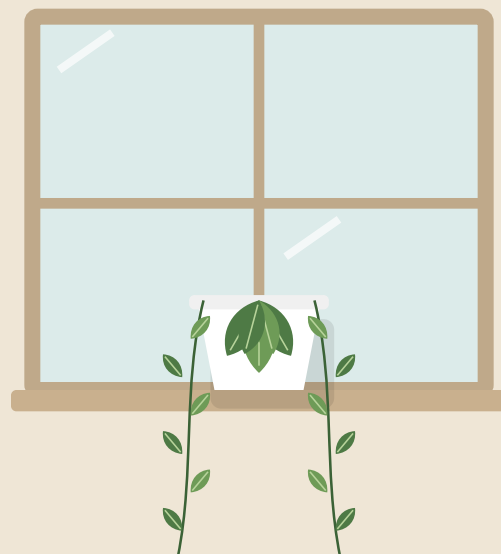
[5] ASPCA Animal Poison Control: Toxic and non-toxic plants [Open the source](#)

A database of plants reported to have effects on dogs, cats and horses. Eating any plant material may cause vomiting and stomach upset in dogs and cats. If you think your animal has eaten something poisonous, contact your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (US) at (888) 426-4435.

About this edition

Written, illustrated and designed by Forgewick, operated by Haris Sohail. Studio Edition 1.0, September 2026. All text, illustrations and worksheets are original. General houseplant guidance: species differ, so check each plant's own care needs.

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THE HAPPY HOUSEPLANT CARE PLANNER

Right spot. Right water. Happy plants.

A simple care routine for any home,
with six printable worksheets.

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