

HOUSEPLANT CUTTINGS

Cuttings are a quick and satisfying way to increase your own indoor plant collection as well as providing welcome gifts. Cuttings are severed parent parts that produce roots and/or stems to form a new and independent plant. The propagation of cuttings is a simple and economical method to produce new houseplants.

Equipment needed for rooting cuttings

- Container - many cuttings can be rooted in one shallow container to save space and medium.
- Rooting medium
 - Rooting Mediums: Use a mix of half perlite and half medium grade peat moss OR half vermiculite and half medium grade peat moss or coarse sand.
- A sharp knife
- A plastic bag
- A source of plant material
- Rooting Hormones: Cuttings will succeed without hormone treatment but these products speed up the process. **Be careful to treat only the tip of cutting.**



General instructions for propagating houseplants:

- Water plants the day before taking cuttings. This will reduce stress and dehydration.
- Place containers of cuttings inside plastic bags and tie closed to retain moisture. Use supports to hold plastic up to keep it from touching cuttings.
- Place containers in a warm, brightly lit area. **Avoid** direct sun since the resulting trapped heat will damage cuttings.
- Check containers regularly to ensure that there is adequate moisture. Punch a few holes in the plastic if soil is too wet.
- Check for rooting by tugging gently on cuttings. When you feel resistance, cuttings are ready for transplant. Gently lift and plant into separate three-inch pots.

Types of Cuttings

Stems, leaves, or roots may be used.

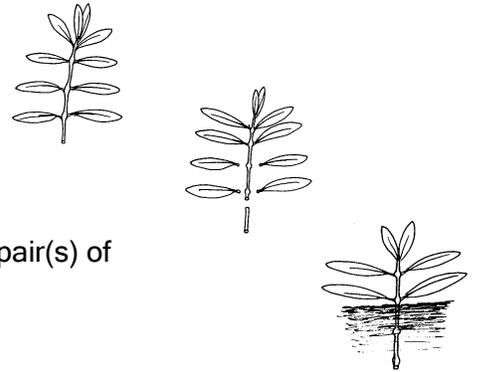
Visit our website at <https://extension.wsu.edu/spokane/master-gardener-program/home-lawn-and-garden/>
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF CUTTINGS:

Herbaceous stem cuttings

ROOTING STEM CUTTINGS IN MEDIUM

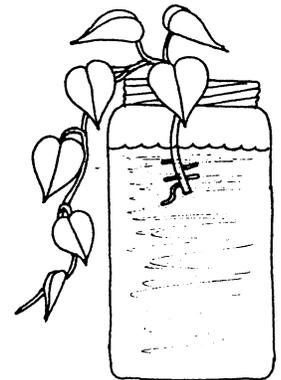
- Fill containers with rooting mix.
- Make small holes with your finger, pencil, etc.
- Take cuttings from newer fast-growing stems.
- Cut just below the third or fourth pair of leaves. Strip lower pair(s) of leaves, leaving two sets of leaves.
- Place bare stems in rooting medium.



Alternatively -

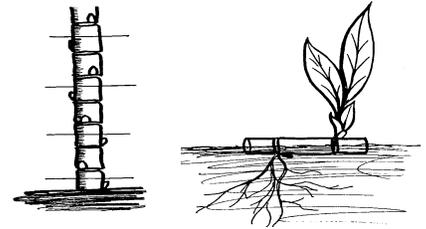
ROOTING STEM CUTTINGS IN WATER

- This is one of the most common and popular methods of propagating new plants.
- Use a glass or a jar of water. Place in bright, warm area.
- Use a clean, sharp blade. Remove healthy cuttings about four to six inches in length. Choose stems with only a short distance between nodes. Cut just above a node.
- Next, trim the cutting to just below a node. Remove lower leaves so that you have a length of bare stem at the base.
- Insert the cutting through wire mesh or some other support so that stem is suspended in the water.
- Keep water topped so that lower part of cutting is always below water surface.
- Roots should develop soon. When cuttings have a small network of roots, plant each in a three-inch container. If you allow cutting to produce an extensive root system, it may not transplant well or possibly not at all. See illustration.
- In general, any plant with a leafy stem will propagate in water. Some that do particularly well are coleus, geranium, ivy, peperomia and pothos.



Cane cuttings

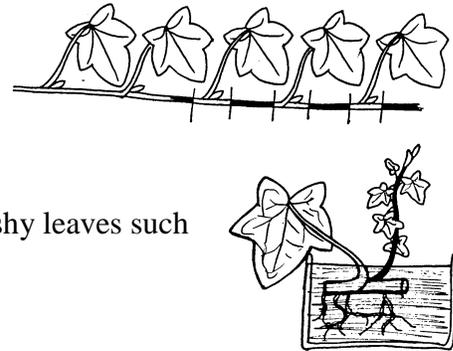
- Cut cane-like stems into sections containing one or two nodes.
- Dust ends with fungicide or activated charcoal; let dry for several hours. Lay the cutting horizontally with half of the cutting below the medium surface, node facing upward.
- When shoots and roots form, pot into three-inch pots.



Leaf cuttings

Whole Leaves

- Cut healthy, mature leaves from parent plant. Leave about one inch of leaf stalk (petiole) if possible.
- Insert stalk into soil so that leaf blades touch mix.
- This method works especially well with plants having fleshy leaves such as begonias, African violets and gloxinias.



Cut or Scored Leaves

Leaves with prominent veins such as those found on begonias and Cape primrose will produce new plants when they are scored or cut into pieces.

- Leaves or pieces of leaves are placed so that veins are in contact with rooting medium.
- When small plants develop, carefully lift, separate and pot them individually in 3-inch pots.



Plantlets (Division)

Division is the easiest method of multiplying plants that naturally produce offsets or basal shoots. These new shoots usually have a few roots and can be separated and planted individually. Plantlets are "babies" on new plants that grow on the parent plant's leaves, stolons, stems or flowers.

- Detach small plants. Leave about one inch of stalk or stolon where appropriate.
- Insert stalk or base of plantlet so that plantlet rests on surface of rooting medium.
- Roots should form in a few weeks. Pot new plants in three-inch containers.
- Plantlets of spider plants can be rooted while still attached to main plant and then detached when roots have formed.



Propagation Techniques for Selected Houseplants

Plant	Herbaceous Cutting	Leaf Cutting	Stem Section	Division	Comments
African Violet		•		•	Cut petioles ½-inch long. Place potted leaf cuttings in plastic bag.
Arrowhead (Nephtytis)	•			•	Cuttings may be rooted in water.
Asparagus fern				•	Keep young divisions constantly moist.
Begonia	•	•			May be started from leaf sections placed on surface of rooting medium. Cleanliness important.
Christmas Cactus	•				Keep moist, but avoid overwatering during rooting.
Coleus	•				Root in water. Easiest of all.
Diffenbachia	•	•	•		Subject to rot during rooting. Do not overwater. Keep clean.
Dracaena	•		•		Stem sections relatively slow.
English Ivy	•				Easy to root. Sometimes slow starting.
Episcia	•	•			Related to African violet. Tip cuttings grow faster than leaf cuttings.
Ferns				•	Keep constantly moist after division.
Fuschia	•	•			Root Easily. Prefers a cool temperature after rooting.
Gardenia	•				Vigorous new shoots root most easily in midsummer.
Geranium	•				Keep foliage dry during rooting.
Gloxinia		•			May be grown from leaf cuttings.
Hibiscus	•				Rooting hormones speed root production. Give bright light.
Hydrangea	•				Tend to root best in spring or early summer.
Impatiens	•				Very easy. May be rooted in water.
Jade Plant	•	•			Keep fairly dry during rooting. Must have well-drained medium, e.g., coarse sand.
Kalancho	•	•			Use vegetative shoots, not flowering shoots for best rooting.
Maidenhair Fern				•	Keep divisions constantly moist.
Peperomia	•	•			Root easily. Avoid excess moisture during rooting.
Philodendron	•				May be rooted in water. Spring and early summer give quickest rooting.
Poinsettia	•				Propagate in late August for home. Cleanliness important.
Pothos	•				Will root in water. Spring and early summer propagation usually most successful.
Rubber Plant	•				Keep humidity high during rooting.
Schefflera	•				Needs high humidity and bright light. Slow rooting.
Snake Plant		•			Place leaf sections in same position they grew. Will not root upside down.
Spider Plant		•			Very easy to root runners. Pot directly in soil mixture.
Zebra Plant	•				Use nonflowering shoots. Give high humidity and good light.