



How to select and properly care for your poinsettia throughout the holiday season. . .

Selecting Healthy Plants

- Select plants with green foliage all the way down to the soil line. This is a good indication that the plants have active, healthy roots.
- Look for plants that have small central flowers with crisp bright foliage.
- Check plants for obvious signs of insects and disease.
- When transporting the plants home, make sure they are protected against temperatures below 50°F. Chilling causes the leaves to drop.

Home Care

- Place in a room where there is sufficient natural light to read fine print.
- Avoid drafts or excess heat from appliances, radiators or ventilating ducts.
- Water the plant thoroughly when soil surface is dry to the touch. Remember to discard excess water.
- To prolong the bright color of the bracts, the plants should be in a room with a temperature range between 65 and 70°F.

After the Holidays

- When bracts age and become muddy green, cut the plant back to 8 inches and grow as a foliage plant.
- Lightly fertilize every 3 to 4 weeks and re-pot as needed.
- The plant may be placed outdoors when outside temperatures are warm. Be sure to avoid night temperatures below 50°F throughout the summer.
- For reflowering in the winter, move the plant indoors October 1. Provide the plant with 6 to 8 hours of direct light daily. Night temperatures should stay between 60 and 70°F.

Poinsettias are Not Poisonous

Since around 1919, an old wives' tale has circulated concerning the alleged poisonous nature of poinsettias. In an effort to alleviate the public's fear, the Society of American Florists and the Ohio State University conducted a scientific investigation into the safety of the poinsettia plant. The Ohio State University research on the poinsettia plant effectively disproved the charge that the poinsettia is harmful to human and animal health. In fact, Poisindex® states that a 50 pound child would have to ingest over 500 bracts (about 100 poinsettia plants!!) to surpass the experimental doses. There was ***no*** toxicity at this level.

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