

Propagating Houseplants

Houseplants can be propagated in many ways. The most common are by seed, terminal or tip cuttings, leaf cutting, stem cutting, division, and not as common air layering. You can multiply your houseplants to share with friends and family or to keep an older plant that is failing.

Seed

Not widely available in packs like flower seed but treated the same way. Seeds usually take two to four weeks to germinate, keep warm, moist and humid in seedling stage and transplant into individual containers when larger. Also, some plants like Palms produce their own seeds, they pop off the pod when they are mature enough.

Terminal or Tip cuttings

This is the most common and simplest way for many varieties of houseplants. Used with Pothos and Philodendron, Figs, Geraniums, Succulents, Nephites and many more. The best cutting is two to four inches long with four to six leaves. Cut off from the plant just above a node, do not let cuttings wilt by sitting for a time. The best rooting is to place the cuttings into moist soil, they can also easily be placed in Root cups to root in Water. Using as many cuttings as possible can make a very full new plant. If you had a long piece of Pothos or Nephites, cut small sections of stem with a leaf attached and place six to ten stems in a 6" pot to create a new plant. If doing cactus, cut the plant, let it sit until the wound heals up and then set it on top of the soil.

Leaf Cuttings

African Violets, Rex Begonia, many Succulents and Jade plants can be propagated by just the leaf, but it can take a long time to develop. Most leaves just insert the stem portion into the soil, keep moist but never wet. A new plant will develop as the roots develop. For certain large leaf plants like a rex Begonia, cut the veins and place them on the soil. New plants will form at the cuts. When plants are large enough and rooted, simply break away from the leaf.

Cane Cuttings

Dieffenbachia, Dracaena, Ti plants and a few others can be propagated this way. If the plant is straight up and very tall it is very easy to cut the cane anywhere from two inches up. You can also segment the cane to include at least one node and place it half in soil upright or horizontally. New roots will sprout from the cane and new plants from the nodes.

Division

Boston Fern, Snake Plant, Asparagus Fern are propagated by this simple method. Any plant that produces underground stems can be divided. Tear apart or cut away the section to divide and plant at the same level. Plant multiple divisions in the same pot to give it a fuller appearance right away.

Air layering

This is similar to a cane cutting, but it is rooted while still attached to the main stem. When a plant is overgrown and only has leaves on top like a Schefflera, Fig, Dieffenbachia, and similar this propagation will work. Cut a diagonal slice halfway through the stem and place a tooth pick in to keep it open. Add some rooting powder and put a ball of moist sphagnum moss around the cut area. Wrap in a plastic baggy and tie off the ends. Water on occasion and plant up when rooted.