

BCC Green Team / Green Up Your Work Space

Care Sheet for Indoor Plants: Growing Information and Tips

Epipremnum, a.k.a. Marble or Variegated Pothos, Golden Pothos, Jade Pothos



Breathing easier and staying healthier

Indoor plants have been shown to help in these ways:

Reduce levels of CO2

Reduce irritation to eyes, ears, and nose and throat

Prevent or ease coughing and congestion

Lower stress

Boost attention capacity; be more productive and creative

Provide a distraction and/or rest for “computer” eyes

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Add humidity to indoor air

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Help decrease allergy symptoms

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Recover faster from the common cold

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Help lessen frequency of headaches

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Add aesthetic beauty to environment

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Remove and mitigate chemicals

Description: Pothos, originally native to the Soloman Islands, can be found growing all over the world. With a steady growth rate in a vining and trailing habit, it features heart-shaped leaves of all sizes. It is available in a wide color array from green to white to a light golden green, found in solid, variegated, marbled, striped and spotted patterns.

Light: Pothos tolerates low light, low humidity, and low temperatures, making it a top-selling plant in the U.S. for offices, classrooms, and homes. Typical office lighting presents no problem – as an indoor plant it responds exceedingly

well to fluorescent and CFL light, and even the new energy efficient L.E.D. lighting. One small caution: direct sunlight all day is likely to fade and burn foliage, diminishing rich color and variegation/marbling the plant is capable of.

Soil: Well drained potting soil ought to be allowed to dry well between waterings. In soil, Pothos, if soggy, will decline. Children's "play sand" (salt + chemical free) and/or small 1/8" perlite, and/or very small aggregate gravel can be mixed with soil - to allow for optimal drainage. While Pothos does *not* respond well to "wet feet" in soil, it has the unique capability to thrive for months, during propagation and root development, in room temperature water.

Propagating: In water, changing every two weeks or so, and clipping any parts that become soft, squishy, rotted, yellow or brown (and composting those) -- Pothos can root in about six to eight weeks. There is no need to pot up the plants right away. As long as they have fresh water, roots will continue to grow for months at a time.

Potting: To "pot up" our Pothos plants at BCC, Green Team might eventually have a small event. Everyone can bring their rooted cuttings and a favorite flower pot and soil mixture. Green Team can have examples and suggestions and photos available. Once we pot them, we can later discuss **Watering** - for the type of soil and pot you have chosen.

Training: *Training your Pothos plant is a creative endeavor!* On down the line, there are many options. When we meet, bring your ideas of how your plant might be situated in your office or work space, what you have for light fixtures and/or windows, and maybe a photo, and we can brainstorm what works best for each person and how you use your space. Hanging the plants, as has been done for some Green Team participants, works well.

Sanitation: Meanwhile, check and keep leaves clean by regularly wiping with a damp cloth or small sponge, yet please *don't* use commercial leaf shine products. Later, cut growing tips with sharp clean scissors to prevent leggy growth. If stems become bare, they may also be trimmed back. Please note excessive watering (once potted in soil) may cause root rot. Pests are rarely an issue for Epipremnum when plant sanitation is practiced regularly.

Did you know?

"... For more than 30 years, B.C. "Bill" Wolverton, a retired civilian scientist for NASA, investigated the use of plants as air- and water-purifying systems for enclosed environments in space missions." <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3230460/>

More recent NASA reports offer the idea, "If man is to move into closed environments, on Earth -- or in space, he must take along nature's life support system." https://www.huffpost.com/entry/indoor-plants-air-purifying-remove-toxins_5cab6e5fe4b02e7a705b9c92

"Chemical pollutants, such as benzene, trichloroethylene, xylene and formaldehyde are some of these chemical compounds. Others include: ammonia, airborne biological pollutants, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides, pesticides, disinfectants (phenols), and radon. Plants can absorb up to 85% of potentially harmful gases. Pothos is particularly efficient at removing benzene and formaldehyde found so often in new products we "live" with every day."

<https://ohsonline.com/articles/2019/09/19/breathe-cleanly-steps-to-purify-the-air-in-your-home.aspx>

<https://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19930073077.pdf>

https://spinoff.nasa.gov/Spinoff2019/cg_7.html

Thank you for your participation in this Green Team Project at Berkshire Community College.