



Poinsettias
(Euphorbia pulcherrima),
the traditional Christmas
flower that adorns many
homes and businesses during
the holiday season, are
brightly colored plants
native to southern Mexico.



Today,
poinsettias
are not only available
in red, the long-time favorite
color, but also in white, pink
and multi-colored, marbled
and speckled varieties. New
varieties also feature curly
(incurved) bracts and
foliage.


Hicks
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All About Poinsettias

The traditional Christmas flower

Tips for Selecting Poinsettias

1. When selecting poinsettias, look at the true flowers – the tiny, yellow flowers found at the center of the colored bracts. The bracts are modified, colored leaves that surround the flowers. Select plants with flowers that are as closed (or unopened) as possible since these will last the longest.
2. Choose plants that are dense, well-balanced and free of broken leaves and branches. Leaves below the colored bracts should be a healthy green color.
3. Poinsettias are tropical plants, so before taking poinsettias outdoors make sure they are carefully wrapped to protect them from the icy cold wind and freezing outdoor temperatures.
4. Do not leave poinsettias in your unheated automobile for any length of time. Transport them in the heated passenger compartment, not in the trunk or in the back of a pick-up truck. These plants can be killed or severely damaged by the cold!

Caring for Your Poinsettia

1. When you bring your poinsettia into your home or office, carefully unwrap it and place in a well-lit spot away from drafts.
2. Poinsettias like a daytime room temperature of no more than 70° and will hold their flowers longer if temperatures are cooler, preferring night temperatures as low as 55°.
3. Keep poinsettias away from the heat of television sets, radiators and heating ducts.
4. Water thoroughly when the soil is almost completely dry; drain off any excess water. Fertilize once a month with fish emulsion or other well-balanced plant food.

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Getting Your Poinsettias to Bloom Again

It can be difficult to get your poinsettias to set flowers and bloom again next year because of the less-than-ideal conditions in your house. Normal home temperatures are usually too high during the winter and good quality, bright light is often limited or lacking. However, if you want to give it a try, the following tips may be helpful.



1. When your poinsettias have finished flowering (when those small yellow flowers in the center of the colored bracts shrivel and brown), allow your plants to dry out to encourage dormancy. This drying should not be so severe as to permit the shriveling of the woody stems, but the leaves should yellow, dry and fall off or be removed. Place the pots on their side in a cool, dry basement or closet until April.
2. Remove the pots from storage in April and place them in full sun. Water them thoroughly and do not let them dry out once growth has started (but don't keep them soggy wet or the roots will rot). Cut the branches back at least 2-3 inches, although they may be safely cut back 50%.
3. Poinsettias can remain in the house or they can be grown outdoors through the summer. Place them outdoors only after all danger of frost has past (usually after May 15). They can be left in pots that can be sunk into the ground in a sunny location in the garden. Fertilize them with fish emulsion or other well-balanced plant food once a month.
4. In September, when night temperatures start to go below 65°, your poinsettias should be brought indoors. Check the plants for insects; if any are found, spray them with a houseplant insect killer.
5. Poinsettias need a sunny location indoors. Daytime temperature should not exceed 75° and night temperatures should cool down to 65°. Keep the soil evenly moist and continue to fertilize once a month with fish emulsion or other well-balanced plant food.
6. Poinsettias set flowers when the days are shorter than 12 hours. Starting in late September, give your plants full sunlight during the day and complete darkness at night (5pm-8am); try placing the plants in a dark closet for this 12-hour period. Exposing them to even the slightest bit of artificial light will prevent flowers from forming. After 40 days of this treatment (when slight coloration begins) the plants can be kept in a normally-lit room. Keep fertilizing once a month with fish emulsion or other well-balanced plant food until the flowers fade and your plants are ready to be cycled back into dormancy.

Stop in during the holiday season to see our wide selection of specialty poinsettias. You'll find traditional reds as well as whites, pinks, marbled and speckled varieties in every size and shape, including hanging baskets as well as designer colors to match every décor. Our poinsettias are specially grown and cared for here in our own greenhouses to ensure you get the best quality possible and then they are carefully wrapped upon purchase to protect them from the harsh elements they might be exposed to traveling to your home or office. All this ensures our poinsettias will provide you with many weeks of holiday enjoyment.

You'll need these:

- Saucer to protect your furniture
- Decorative pot cover or planter
- Gel-Spike Plant Waterer
- Fish emulsion or other well-balanced plant food



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