

Kid & Pet Friendly **HOUSEPLANTS**

Summit[®]
... responsible solutions.



melindamyers.com

BENEFITS OF INCLUDING HOUSEPLANTS

REDUCE STRESS, ELEVATE MOOD

PURIFY AIR - [LINK TO NASA STUDY](#)

* Indicates plants studied that helped remove toxins from the air

KID & PET TOXICITY INFORMATION

Use **botanical names** when researching toxicity of plants. Common names vary on websites and with gardeners. Using the botanical name will ensure you obtain information about the correct plant.

FOR PETS

- [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#)
- [Important Tips from Penn Vet to Keep Pets Safe During the Holidays](#)
- [Pet-friendly Indoor Gardening Strategies](#)
- [Pet Safe Indoor Gardening](#)

FOR PEOPLE

- [University of California Safe and Poisonous Garden Plants](#)
- [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#)
- Common Plants What's Poisonous and What's Not
University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics
800-815-8855
- Handbook of Poisonous and Injurious Plants Third Edition
New York Botanical Gardens, Lewis S. Nelson MD & Michael J. Balick PhD

FOR PETS & PEOPLE

- [North Carolina State University Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox](#)

A FEW HOUSEPLANTS TO CONSIDER

I took a very conservative approach and included those that were listed as nontoxic to both people and pets to avoid any confusion. Use the resources provided as you continue to expand your indoor plant collection. This will provide a starting point. As you know, individual allergic responses to anything can vary, so keep this in mind as you create or expand your indoor garden.

If you suspect that a person or pet has eaten a quantity of these or other houseplants and is exhibiting signs of illness or a skin reaction, contact [Poison Control](#) or 1-800-222-1222 for people and your veterinarian for pets.

Summit Responsible Solutions

Protecting you, and the environment we live in.

Summit Mosquito Dunks® and Mosquito Bits® are America's favorite biological mosquito controls because they kill mosquitoes before they become biting, disease-spreading adults. The active ingredient is *Bti* (*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*), a bacterium that's deadly to mosquito larvae but harmless to other living things.

Summit Mosquito Bits® can also be used to control fungus gnats on indoor plants. Just sprinkle on the soil surface and water in.

Summit® Year-Round® Spray Oil is an organic, environmentally responsible way to kill insect pests on even the most sensitive plants. Summit® Year-Round® Spray Oil has no bad odor, and it can be used on garden plants and fruit trees right up to the day of harvest. Use it to kill insects on indoor and outdoor plants.

[Learn More](#)



MATCH PLANTS TO THE GROWING CONDITIONS

Light is often the greatest limiting factor for successfully growing indoor plants. Use the following information as you select and place houseplants in your home.

LOW TO MODERATE LIGHT

- Able to read without too much strain
- Back from or to the side of an east- or west-facing window
- In front of a north window

BRIGHT, INDIRECT LIGHT

- Plants in NE or NW window
 - Some direct light in the morning or afternoon
 - Bright the rest of the day

BRIGHT LIGHT

- Plants near an east- or west-facing window
 - 2 to 4 hours of direct sun
 - No direct midday sun
 - Back from south-facing window (except for winter in north)

DIRECT SUNLIGHT

- 4 to 5 hours of direct sunlight
- Northern gardeners move plants to south-facing window in winter

BOOSTING THE LIGHT

- Swapping plants between high and low light locations
 - Switch plants every 2 weeks from low to high light locations
- Artificial lights



About Melinda

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including *Can't Miss Small Space Gardening*, the *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, and *Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy*. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on over 115 TV and radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series, including the latest *Food Gardening for Everyone* DVD set. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine, writes the twice monthly "Gardeners' Questions" newspaper column and a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website,
melindamyers.com

LOW LIGHT TOLERANT

CAST IRON PLANT, SALOON PLANT

Aspidistra eliator

- Tolerates very low light and humidity
- Allow soil to dry between watering
 - Especially in winter
- Variegated varieties available
- **Speckled Cast Iron Plant**
- *Aspidistra eliator* 'Milky Way'

STAGHORN FERN

Platycerium spp.

- Low to medium light
- Epiphyte - usually found mounted on a piece of wood
- Water once the compost or peat moss starts to dry
- High humidity
- No cold drafts
- Forms offsets or pups that can be removed to start new plants

PRAYER PLANT

Maranta and *Calathea*

- Moderate, indirect light
 - Scorched and brown spots in direct light
 - Pale leaves, less colorful when it doesn't receive sufficient light
- Consistently moist soil
- Sensitive to fluoride and chlorine in the water
- Needs high humidity
- **Brown leaf tips and margins**
- **Growing Prayer Plants Indoors**

BROMELIADS

Various Genera

- Those with soft, pliable leaves are more tolerant of low light
- Place those with thicker leaves in brighter light
- Epiphyte grown in a well-drained potting mix or grown as an air plant
- Long blooming, providing months of colorful flowers
- Water often enough to prevent roots from drying
 - Tank types
 - ◆ Keep leaf cup full of water and refresh regularly
 - Those growing in soil
 - ◆ Water thoroughly and often enough to prevent roots from drying
 - **Tillandsia** (Air Plants)
 - ◆ Soak in tepid water every week or two

UPCOMING APPEARANCES & WEBINARS

Check often as more appearances and webinars continue to be added.

October 23rd

**San Diego Fall Home &
Garden Show**

*Designing Your Small Space
Garden*

October 27th Webinar

Pruning Tips for Shrubs

BRIGHT, INDIRECT LIGHT

SPIDER PLANT

Chlorophytum comosum

- Bright, indirect light
- Slightly moist soil, but well-drained
 - Green variety more tolerant of low light
 - Less variegation in lower light
- Avoid cold drafts
- Brown tips from fluoride and chlorine in water
- Propagate by division or offsets

NERVE PLANT

Fittonia

- Bright, indirect light
- Moist, well-drained, not soggy soil
- High humidity
- Can be short lived, so regularly take cuttings to start new plants
- Green leaves with red or white veins

PEPEROMIA

Peperomia

- Prefer bright, indirect light, but will tolerate lower light
 - Less variegation and smaller leaves in low light
- Water when top inch of soil is dry
- Allow top few inches of soil to dry for thicker leafed varieties
- Generally slow growing, so minimal fertilizer and pruning needed
- Ripple Peperomia
- *Peperomia caperata* 'Ripple'
 - Textured leaves
- Watermelon Peperomia
- *Peperomia argyreia*
 - Smooth leaves colored like watermelon rind

*Peperomias listed as non-toxic to people, cats and dogs on ASPCA and most Children's hospital sites. North Carolina State University mentions **Peperomia obtusifolia** leaves contain alkaloids that are moderately toxic to people but there have been no reported cases and some toxicity to animals.*

BOSTON FERN

Nephrolepis exaltata

- Bright, indirect light
- Moist soil
- High humidity

GRAPE IVY

Cissus alata formerly *Cissus rhombifolia*

- Bright, indirect light
- Water thoroughly when top few inches of soil are dry
- Avoid drafts
- Pinch to encourage bushier growth

CHOCOLATE SOLDIER

Alsobia dianthiflora formerly *Episcia*

- Bright, indirect to direct light
- Succulent - water when soil starts to dry and more often when flowering
- Protect from drafts
- Pinch to encourage more compact growth

PURPLE PASSION

Gynura aurantiaca

- Bright, indirect light
- Well-drained potting mix
- Water when soil just begins to dry
- Do not overwater, soggy soil leads to rot
- Prune to encourage more compact growth

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PARLOR PALM, BAMBOO PALM

Chamaedorea elegans

- Prefers bright, indirect light, but will tolerate lower light
- Prefers humidity, but tolerates normal home conditions
- Brown leaf tips on palms can be caused by low humidity and fluoride in water
- Relatively slower growing
- **Trim or air layering tall plants**
- Sensitive to fluoride and chlorine in water
- Human toxicity for Bamboo Palm *C. seifrizii*
 - Fruit has oxalic acid, irritating to skin when handled

ARECA PALM

Dypsis lutescens

- Same as above, but less tolerant of lower light conditions

CHRISTMAS, EASTER & THANKSGIVING CACTUS

Schlumbergera spp.

- **Differences between the three:**
 - Christmas cactus
 - ◆ Most sold in stores are hybrids and have small, smooth segments
 - Thanksgiving cactus - *Schlumbergera truncata*
 - ◆ Toothed or jagged segments
 - Easter cactus - *Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri* formerly *S. gaertneri*
 - ◆ Starts flowering in spring as days begin to lengthen
- Bright, indirect light
- Moist, well-drained soil
- Can be long lived
- **Rebloom Christmas and Thanksgiving Cactus**
 - Begin forcing October 1st
 - ◆ 14 hours of total darkness each night and bright light during the day
 - ◆ Provide cooler night temperatures
 - ◆ Allow soil to go a bit drier

AFRICAN VIOLET

Streptocarpus formerly *Saintpaulia*

- Bright, indirect light
- Moist, organic soil
- High humidity
- Warm, draft free location
- Keep cold water off leaves
- Prevent leaves from touching salt buildup on soil surface and pot lip

MOTH ORCHID

Phalaenopsis

- Bright, indirect light
- Orchid potting mix
- Water thoroughly once a week with tepid water
- High humidity
- **Orchid Care**
- **Reblooming Moth Orchids**

BRIGHT OR DIRECT LIGHT

ZEBRA HAWORTHIA

Haworthiopsis attenuata formerly *Haworthia attenuata*

- Bright, indirect to direct light
 - Tolerates lower light than most cacti
- Cacti and succulent potting mix
- Warm temperatures in summer and cooler in winter

ECHEVERIA

- Some Hens & Chicks are *Echeveria* and others are *Sempervivum* (low severity toxicity)
- Bright to direct light
- Well-drained soil
- Cooler temperatures in the winter

BURRO'S TAIL

Sedum morganianum

- Bright to direct light
- Allow soil to dry between watering
- Cold temperature tolerant
- Cool and dry helps promote spring bloom

WAX PLANT

Hoya carnosa

- Bright light
- Well-drained potting mix
- Water thoroughly when potting mix is dry
- Keep soil a bit more moist in summer when actively growing
- Flowers form on long, bare stem - do not remove these stems
- High humidity in spring and summer, cooler temperatures and drier soil in winter promotes flowering on pot bound plants

LIPSTICK PLANT

Aeschynanthus humilis

- Bright light for best flowering
- Loose, well-drained potting mix
- Water thoroughly when top inch of soil is dry
- Prefers warm temperatures away from drafts
- Encourage flowering

PONYTAIL PALM

Beaucarnea recurvata

- Bright light
- Well-drained potting mix
- Water thoroughly when potting mix is dry

NORFOLK ISLAND PINE

Araucaria heterophylla

- Bright light
 - Excessive sunlight may cause bleaching of leaves
- Moist, well-drained soil
- High humidity
- Cool, not drafty location

HIBISCUS

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis

- Overwintering indoors



A FEW PET SAFE HERBS

BASIL
CILANTRO
LEMON BALM
ROSEMARY
SAGE

A FEW HERBS TO AVOID - **TOXIC TO PETS**

COMMON MINT
LAVENDER
LEMON GRASS
OREGANO
PARSLEY

OTHER PET AND KID FRIENDLY GARDENING TIPS

- Display them out of reach
 - Hanging basket
 - High shelf
- Prevent digging and using potting mix as litter box
 - Mulch soil
 - ◆ Chunky bark
 - ◆ Corks
 - ◆ Foil
 - Cat scat mats
- Grow wheat grass for cats

MANAGE HOUSEPLANT PESTS SAFELY

Use organic products like
Summit Year-Round® Horticultural Spray Oil
to manage pests safely for kids and pets.

For more pest control options watch my
Organic Control for Houseplant Pests
webinar recording for free.

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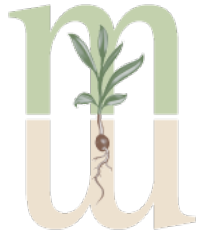


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Melinda's Garden Moment nationally syndicated TV and Radio segments

Birds & Blooms magazine

Books

- Midwest Gardener's Handbook
- Small Space Gardening
- Midwest Lawn Guides
- Minnesota & Wisconsin Getting Started Garden Guide
- Month-by-Month Gardening in Minnesota & Wisconsin
- Michigan Getting Started Garden Guide
- Month-by-Month Gardening in Michigan
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