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How to Care for English Ivy



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Botanical Name: *Hedera helix*

Plant Type: House plant

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Growing English Ivy Plants: Watering, Lighting, Pests, and More

By [Catherine Boeckmann](#)

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There are hundreds of cultivars of the
English ivy. It is a varied group with

Leaves are usually less than an inch to over 3 inches long. Some of the leaf shapes are flat, heart-shape, curly, and willow-like.

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PLANTING

- Plant the ivy in a rich houseplant potting mix.
- Use a container with drainage holes.
- Place the ivy in bright light, but not direct sun. It tolerates low to medium light, but growth is reduced and variegated varieties may turn all green.
- English ivy prefers cooler temperatures, so keep it away from radia-

GROWING

- After watering the ivy, let the soil dry to the touch before watering again.
- Spray the leaves with water weekly to discourage spider mites.
- Wipe the leaves periodically with a moist cloth to help prevent insect pests.
- Fertilize in early spring and late summer with a houseplant fertilizer.
- Most types of ivy stem cuttings will root easily in water.
- Repot the ivy in a slightly bigger pot when it becomes root-bound or top-heavy.

Types

- *Hedera helix* '**Anne Marie**' has medium green leaves with a creamy white edge.

white margins.

- *H. helix* 'Gold Child' is one of the more popular variegated ivies. It has soft green leaves with wide bright cream-yellow margins.
- *H. helix* 'Congesta' is bushy with dark green leaves that are tightly and evenly arranged along a stem.

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PESTS/DISEASES

- Root rot can occur from a soil that does not drain quickly or overwatering.
- Plant diseases are very rare.

WIT AND WISDOM

- The plant's sap can cause skin rash.
- Ivies can be trained to climb different shape frames such as hearts, circles, cones, or pyramids. Choose plants with long stems and weave them around the frame placed in the pot.
- English ivy grown outdoors is considered invasive in a number of regions of the United States. The plant is on the official noxious weed lists in the states of Oregon and Washington.
- The British herbalist John Gerard recommended in 1597 to infuse ivy leaves in water as a wash for sore or watering eyes.

HOUSEPLANT GUIDES

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catherine Boeckmann



Catherine Boeckmann loves nature, stargazing, and gardening so it's not surprising that she and The Old Farmer's Almanac found each other. She leads digital content for the Almanac website, and is also a certified master gardener in the state of Indiana. [Read More from Catherine Boeckmann](#)

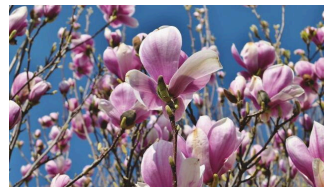
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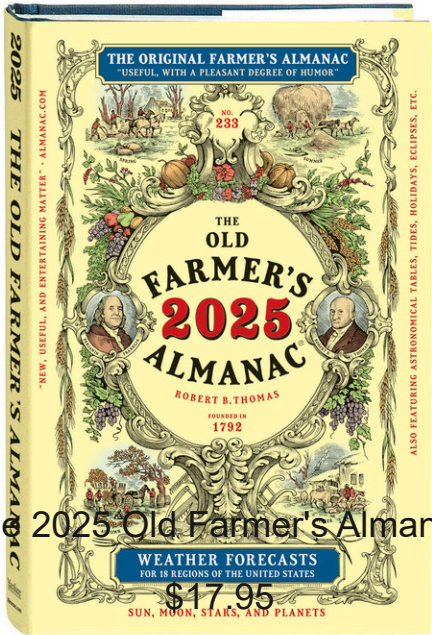
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