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How to Care for Peace Lilies



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Growing Peace Lily Plants: Watering, Light, Repotting, and Pests

By [Catherine Boeckmann](#)

Last Updated: February 24, 2025



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Learn how to care for a peace lily, one of the most popular indoor plants. These beautiful houseplants are fairly easy to grow, but knowing how often to water peace lilies and what to do if their leaves droop or turn yellow is essential. Plus, find tips on how to repot your peace lily to keep it happy!

About Peace Lilies

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Peace lilies are not true lilies.

They are tropical, evergreen plants in the Arum family, native to tropical Central and South America. These plants thrive on the forest floor, receiving dappled sunlight and consistent moisture and humidity. Replicating these conditions in the home is the key to keeping your peace lily happy and healthy.

With enough light, peace lilies produce white to off-white flowers starting in the early summer and continue to bloom throughout the year in the right conditions.

Most household varieties of peace lily grow up to 16 inches tall, but larger outdoor cultivars can have leaves up to 6 feet tall. Peace lilies are not cold-hardy, so they can only be

Is the Peace Lily Toxic to Cats and Dogs?

Yes, peace lilies are mildly toxic. All parts of the peace lily plant contain calcium oxalate, which may cause stomach and respiratory irritation if ingested in large amounts. **Keep peace lilies out of reach of small children and pets who might chew on the plant.**

Common plants containing calcium oxalate also include philodendrons, [daffodils](#), [true lilies](#), and [hyacinths](#).

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PLANTING

How to Plant, Repot, and Divide Peace Lilies

- Plant or replant your lilies in a container twice as large as the root ball with well-draining, all-purpose potting soil. The soil should be able to hold moisture and dry out slowly over time. Peace lilies don't like to dry out entirely, but they also won't do well if kept in soil that's constantly wet, as this fosters root rot fungus.
- Repotting the plant every few years in the spring is suitable for the peace lily, as it will appreciate the refreshed soil.
- Eventually, the peace lily may grow too large for its pot, at which point it can be divided. Remove the plant from its pot and split it into smaller plants, being sure to leave several leaves per clump. Peace lilies

Can Peace Lilies be Grown in Water?

Yes, peace lilies can grow in water alone; they are often sold in vases without any soil.

Ideally, the base of the plant should be suspended above the water line, either by a specially made vase insert or a layer of small river stones. This allows the roots to grow down into the water but keeps the base of the plant and its leaves from being constantly wet, which can cause rot.

GROWING

Lighting

- Place peace lilies in indirect but bright sunlight. An east-facing window is perfect, as the plant will be exposed to the bright morning sun. A north-facing window would also be a good choice for a peace lily.
- Keep peace lilies out of areas where they'll get direct sunlight all day (such as in a south-facing window), as it may dry them out too much.

Watering

the dryness of the soil that counts. Keep the soil lightly moist to the touch but not overly saturated. Peace lilies can tolerate short periods of dry soil, but their leaves will develop brown tips if they don't have enough water or humidity.

- **Tip:** One nice thing about peace lilies is that they will tell you when they're thirsty: the plant's leaves start to droop. When the plant starts to look less "perky" than usual, test the soil with your finger. If it feels dry, it's time to water again. They can be a bit dramatic; don't panic if they start to wilt.
- Peace lilies are sensitive to chemicals commonly found in tap water, such as fluoride, which may cause **brown leaf tips**. Use filtered, room-temperature water, if possible.

Humidity

- Peace lilies enjoy high humidity. Misting their leaves or placing their pot atop a moistened tray of gravel can help to increase humidity around the plant.

Fertilizing

- Peace lilies are not heavy feeders, so fertilize only occasionally. To encourage spring

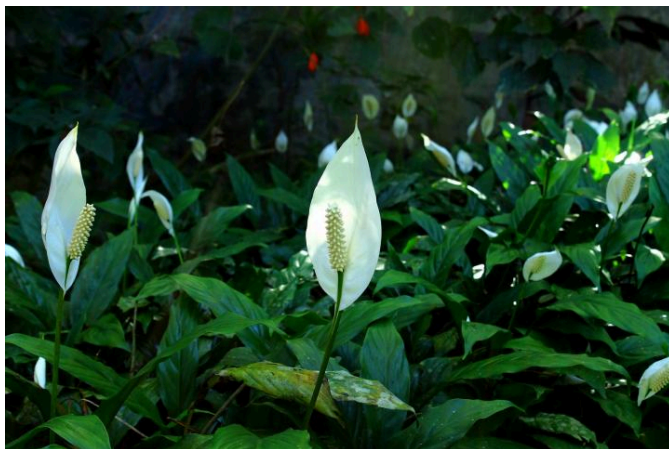
weeks or so with a balanced houseplant fertilizer starting in late winter.

Temperature

- Peace lilies are tropical plants; they do best in temperatures between 65°F and 75°F degrees (18 to 23°C) during the day and about 10°F cooler at night.
- Keep these plants away from the furnace or a drafty window or door.

Other Peace Lily Care Tips

- The large leaves of peace lilies tend to collect a lot of dust in the home. Gently wipe them down with a wet paper towel occasionally; a thick layer of dust can inhibit photosynthesis.



How to Get Peace Lilies to Flower

- Most often, if no flowers appear, the plant

doesn't mean no light! To encourage flowering, move the plant to a brighter location where it will receive bright, indirect light for at least a few hours each day.

- Green flowers, weak-looking flowers, or a general lack of flowers can also be caused by improper fertilizing. In the case of green flowers, cut back on fertilizing, as the plant may be getting too much nitrogen. In the case of weak-looking flowers or a lack of flowers, try switching to a fertilizer made for flowering plants. This type of fertilizer will have a higher amount of phosphorous, which plants need for blooming.

Types

Specialty varieties of peace lilies are not very easy to come by in most garden centers, though they have been growing in popularity. You may have more success ordering them from an online source.

- *Spathiphyllum wallisii* is a smaller peace lily, reaching only 12 inches tall.
- 'Petite' is smaller still, at approximately 8–10 inches.
- 'Sensation' is the largest variety available, capable of growing up to 4–6 feet in height

- **‘Domino’**, is a medium-size variety with attractively variegated leaves.
- **‘Mojo Lime’**, which has lime-green foliage, is another medium-size peace lily.

GARDENING PRODUCTS



PESTS/DISEASES

- **Brown leaf tips** are commonly caused by excessive direct sunlight, over-fertilization, lack of water, and/or low humidity. Keeping the plant on a tray of moistened gravel or misting the leaves can help to increase humidity.
- **Yellow leaves** may be caused by overwatering, underwatering, or old age (of the leaf). If the oldest leaves are yellowing and

may just need more space to stretch its roots.

- **Scale and mealybugs** will happily take up residence on the plant, if given the opportunity. A thorough wipe-down of leaves with a dish soap and water solution or insecticidal soap can be effective at stopping them, though repeated applications may be necessary. [Learn more about how to get rid of scale and mealybugs.](#)
- **Droopy or wilting leaves** are often the result of too much water. Often, once per week is enough. When you water the plant, wait until the moisture comes out of the drainage holes, but never leave water sitting in the saucer or water the saucer, hoping the moisture moves up the plant. If the water drains too quickly through to the saucer, then your soil is too sandy; your soil needs to be well-draining and porous, containing peat moss, fine bark, or perlite.

WIT AND WISDOM

- The peace lily is said to have gotten its common name from its white flowers, which rise timidly above its green foliage and resemble white flags of peace.

- The plant's attractive blooms are also the source of its Latin name, *Spathiphyllum*, meaning "spathe-leaf." The flowers consist of the *spathe* (the white, sheath-like leaf) and the *spadix* (the spike of small flowers located within the spathe).
- Peace lilies are poisonous to dogs. Learn more about [houseplants that are toxic to your pets.](#)



A peace lily's flower consists of a spathe (white sheath) and a spadix (green or off-white spike of flowers).

Photo by W. Carter/Wikimedia

HOUSEPLANT GUIDES

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catherine Boeckmann



Catherine Boeckmann loves nature, stargazing, and gardening so it's not surprising that she and The Old

fied master gardener in the state of
Indiana. [Read More from Catherine
Boeckmann](#)

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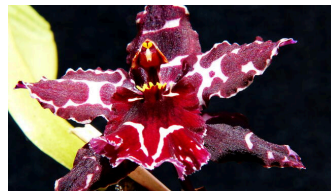
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COMMENTS

ADD A COMMENT

Dave (not verified) 1 month 1 week ago

My 27-year-old peace lily Bob has not bloomed for 2 years. He is in the same window space and has the same watering schedule, but no blooms. I rotate him every couple of years. Any ideas?

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REPLY

The Editors 1 month 1 week ago

Hi, Dave. It sounds like Bob might like to be re-potted and perhaps given a new lo-

they receives lots of bright, indirect sunlight. Try moving him to a place that is bright and out of the shade, but won't be in direct sun. Also, Sherri (comment directly below) has an interesting tip about using banana-infused water!

REPLY

Sherri (not verified) 1 month 3 weeks ago

I've had my large peace lilies for going on 20 years. They weren't too find of flowering until I began watering them with banana infused water. I keep a one gallon jug full of banana peels under water in my laundry room. Every couple of weeks or so I dump it out and water the lilies. They flower and seem more happy now.

REPLY

The Editors 1 month 3 weeks ago

Thanks for sharing, Sherri! Great tip!

REPLY

I bought a peace lily
In a round vase in water wit the gel
.. beautiful.. but all my flowers are green ... in
kitchen window low sunlight ... why are my flowers
green ... please help

REPLY

Joe Bills 7 months ago

It is natural for the peace lily's spathe—the leaf-like wrapping that surrounds the small flowers—to be green as it develops. In its normal cycle, the spathe starts and ends green, turning brilliant white mid-season. That is probably what you are seeing. But if you feel like it is more than just that, there are a few things you can do to bring out the brighter whites. The peace lily needs minimal fertilizer, so house-plant fertilizer should be used at half strength, only once or twice a year. The peace lily thrives in bright, but indirect, light and in moist but well-drained soil.

Dera (not verified) 10 months 3 weeks ago

Why does the flower on peace lily turn brown

REPLY

Gloria Bridget (not verified) 10 months ago

Am I supposed to cut the brown leaves off or just let them fall off?

REPLY

The Editors 10 months ago

The edges of the leaves can turn brown by overfertilization or by excessive drying. Use sharp scissors to cut away the dead, brown areas. Just be sure to follow the leaf's natural shape.

REPLY

Joseph Simonn ... (not verified) 11 months ago

This is an easy plant; you'll do great!

This plant likes to be overwatered but not too dry

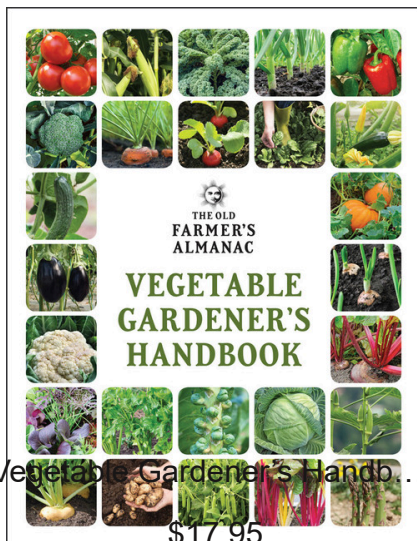
long without watering it, you'll see yellowing leaves that eventually die off. I have 2 of these; one is about 12 feet away from a south-facing window and gets indirect bright sunlight (it's a big window). The other is in a darker west-facing window, but that room has grow lights. They are both thriving; just keep them away from the direct sun.

Learn More: <https://www.bumbleplants.com/>

REPLY

MORE COMMENTS

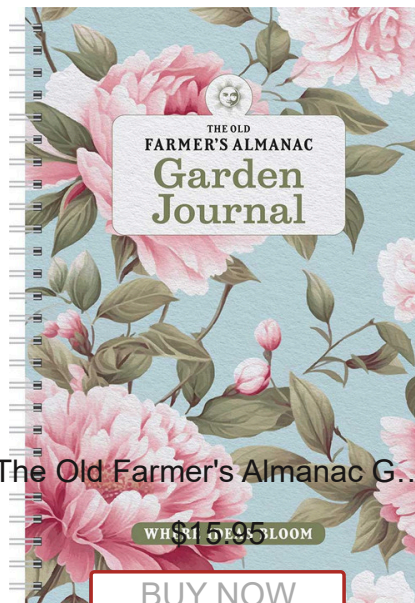
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