

HOW TO CARE FOR ALOE VERA

Aloe vera is a common houseplant that belongs to the genus Aloe. It is an evergreen perennial that grows wild in tropical and hot, dry climates around the world. With proper care, flowers can appear on the end of the stalks. It is widely popular as topical medicinal plant and cultivated mainly for commercial purposes as main ingredient for skin care products such as lotion, soap, skin moisturizer, ointment, etc. It has succulent features, jagged edges with leaves containing soothing gel for sunburn treatment and other skin irritations. It may be a wonderful cosmetics and skincare plant but never make the mistake of ingesting the leaves as it may cause some severe reactions to humans and pets.

Planting Procedure:

Step 1: Transplant the Aloe vera plant

- A. Since aloe vera plants are top-heavy with relatively short roots, it is best to move it to a heavier pot to prevent it from falling over.
- B. Choose a spot that receives full sun for the plant to thrive. It requires 8-10 hours of sunlight a day. It grows best in warm and hot climates but can also withstand cool temperatures as long as it doesn't go below -4°C.
- C. Aloe vera plants require well-draining soil which may be cactus potting mix or create your own potting soil made up of equal parts sand, soil and gravel. The pot must have a hole in the base for water to drain through.
- D. Carefully place the aloe vera root ball just below the soil surface and make sure the thick, green leaves do not touch the soil or they may rot.
- E. Wait for a few days before you water the plant and give some time for the plant to repair damaged roots during planting. Watering it immediately may contribute to root rot.



Step 2:

Daily Care & Troubleshooting

- A. Only water whenever the soil is dry during the growing season.
- B. During winter season, water once or twice a month only.
- C. Fertilizer is not required for aloe vera plants.
- D. Move the plant to a location that can receive more sunlight if leaves look flat and low.
- E. Move the plant to a location that receives shade if leaves turn brown.
- F. Increase watering frequency if leaves look curled and thin.
- G. Stop watering if the leaves look yellow or fall apart.

Step 3:

Propagate Aloe Vera Plant

- A. Once the aloe vera plant become an adult plant, it will produce younger plants called pups. These are usually lighter green in color and does not have the spiny leaf edges as the adult plant.
- B. Let the young plants grow around 3-5 inches tall with its own set of leaves.
- C. Remove the young plant with a sharp, clean knife to reduce infection.
- D. To reduce the chance of infection, leave the young plant in the air for a couple of days before putting it in the soil.
- E. Prepare a new container for the young plant with a well-draining soil. Be sure to put in the plant without burying the leaves and support the plant with some pebbles.
- F. In the beginning the young plant has no roots, so it is good to mist it with a spray bottle once every few days.
- G. Once roots start to appear after a couple of weeks, you may water the plant sparingly. Treat it as an adult plant and follow the daily care instructions.

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