

INSIDE OUT WITH TROPICAL INDOOR PLANTS

It seems there is still nothing so soothing and tranquil as the lush, green beauty of the tropics. Plants with large leaves, thick, rich foliage, and showy flowers are usually associated with tropical areas, but you can create your own tropical paradise right here in the Pacific Northwest by using indoor plants outdoors. Mixed with bright colored annuals, you can create a space you'll love all summer long. Just like us, indoor plants love being outside in the summer. With a small amount of preparation, you can use indoor plants outdoors, planning to bring them back inside in the fall.

1. The first thing to consider is the temperature. It's best to wait until nighttime temperatures are consistently in the high 40's or low 50's. Very few houseplants can handle temperatures cooler than that.

2. Once it's safe to take them outside, give your plant(s) a thorough soaking; most plants benefit from a good rinse of the foliage too. This is also a good time to fertilize with a well-balanced slow release fertilizer. For blooming plants, add a little extra phosphorus to boost blooms.

3. The next, and most important key to "Inside Out" success is finding the right spot for your plants. We tend to think that tropical plants can handle full sun, but in reality, they sunburn as easily as we do. But relax, you don't have to go out and apply the SPF 30 sunscreen on their leaves every morning, just chose a location that provides shade during the hottest part of the day, (1:00 to 5:00 PM). Morning sun is almost always best.

4. Your indoor plant(s) will probably have very different water needs outdoors than they would indoors, so be prepared to adjust your watering schedule accordingly.

5. Finally, watch your plant(s) for signs of pests. Insects and/or animals may find your favorite orchid or palm a tasty treat. If insects are present, try rinsing them off with a mild soap solution. If the problem persists, you may want to take the plant indoors after treatment.

Remember that plants, like us, are individuals, so be sure to check your plants regularly for signs of stress. Chances are you will see only beautiful, thriving plants that enjoy your yard as much as you do. When it's time to come back inside in the fall they will be full and happy and ready for a nice warm winter indoors.



Sunnier Areas (not full hot sun)

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| Jade Plant | Bird of Paradise |
| Rubber Plant | Pencil Cactus |
| Schefflera | Hoya |
| Snake Plant | Cacti |
| Wandering Jew | Sago Palm |
| Croton | Ponytail Palm |
| Tropical Hibiscus | |

Shadier Areas

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| Orchids | Bamboo Palms |
| Ferns | Philodendrons |
| Anthuriums | Spider Plant |
| Chinese Evergreen | Alocasia |
| Ficus | Peace Lily |
| Kentia Palms | Draceana |
| Jasmine | |