



Caring for Blooming “Gift” Plants

There are two types of flowering plants. There are many varieties within those types, which provide a temporary display (blooming “gift” plants/short-lived gift plants) and then there are the varieties that can take up permanent residence in your home (Flowering Houseplants/Patio plants).

Blooming “Gift” Plants fall into the short-lived “gift” plant category. Unlike the flowering houseplants, the members of this group may be temporary. The flowers usually only last a few months, with exception to bulb plants and specialty plants that only last a couple of weeks. Some have been known to last up to 6 months like the Kalanchoe and the Cyclamen. Once the flowers fade the next stage depends on the type of plant. Most are thrown away; some can be kept for another year as a houseplant or as a patio /garden plant in the summer, but most are extremely difficult to keep alive or re-bloom. Bulb plants are usually planted outdoors or stored in a cool dark location and then replanted. Each plant requires specific care; this information can be found in houseplant and garden books and/or on the Internet.

You should never choose a blooming houseplant if you want something that will live in your living room as a permanent feature. These plants are for quick color to enjoy for a short amount of time. It is a cardinal rule to check before buying whether that plant in bloom is a Flowering House Plant or a Short-Lived “Gift” Plant.

Some of the most spectacular blooming “gift” plants are the Azalea, Cineraria, Gloxinia, Chrysanthemum and Tulip. This group of plants is sometimes referred to as “florist” or “gift” plants and has an essential part to play in the indoor plants scene. During the dark winter months, they provide a splash of color when outdoor flowering plants are absent. The “forced bulb” group provides a spring display weeks earlier than the bulbs would flower naturally. They make excellent gifts for people who don’t have green thumbs.

After a few weeks, or perhaps months, the flowers will fade and, in nearly all types, the lower leaves may fall and the plant may die. This is not your fault-it’s a basic feature of this group of plants. However, flowers fading and leaves falling should *not* take place in a matter of days after you have received the plant. This may indicate that something is wrong. As a general rule, Blooming “gift” plants need bright, indirect sunlight, cool night conditions between 50 and 60 degrees F, no more than 10 degrees warmer during the day and moderately moist compost. Allow the top 1/3rd of the soil to dry before watering. Warm air is generally the biggest enemy as it causes the plant to dry out too fast and the flowers and leaves to wither.

Cool-loving plants

Azalea, Forced Bulb Plants (Outdoor and Indoor Types), Calceolaria (Pocket Book Plant), Caladium, Campanula, Chrysanthemum, Cineraria, Cyclamen, Dianthus (Carnation), Erica (Heather), Hydrangea, Assorted Lilies, Primula (primrose) and Solanum (winter cherry)

- **Temperature:** Cool – 50 to 60 degrees F. night temperature
- **Light:** Bright light, keep away from direct sunlight. If the plant quits blooming, you may need to increase the light slightly
- **Water:** Keep compost moist (but not soggy) at all times. Employ the immersion method if the plant ever goes completely dry. Allow the soil to dry down 1/3rd between watering once flowers have faded



- **Air Humidity:** Put plant on a pebble tray with water, not allowing the plant to sit in the water. Occasionally mist air around the plant
- **Care after flowering:** Reduce watering and start feeding. Use an all-purpose 20-20-20 fertilizer. Research care instructions for your particular plant, and/or instructions for bloom induction

Average warmth plants

Anthurium, Begonia, Beloperone (Shrimp Plant), Bromeliad, Capsicum (Ornamental Pepper), Crossandra, Cuphea (Hawaiian Heather), Episcia (Chocolate Soldier), Eucharis (Amazon Lily), Exacum (Persian Violet), Gardenia, Fuchsia, Gloxinia, Hibiscus, Jasmine, Kalanchoe, Lisianthus, Miniature Rose, Saintpaulia (African Violet),

- **Temperature:** Average warmth- Minimum 55 to 60 degrees F. Some plants require cooler night temps in winter
- **Light:** Bright light - avoid too much direct sun. A few hours of morning or evening sun in winter are beneficial
- **Water:** The compost should be kept moist from spring to fall – Allow the soil surface to dry out by 1/3rd before watering. Water thoroughly but sparingly in winter
- **Air Humidity:** Moist air is necessary, mist around the plant but do not wet the leaves unless otherwise indicated. Wetting of the leaves will cause powdery mildew on Begonia, Episcia spp. and Roses. Gardenia and Jasmine need to be misted regularly
- **Care after flowering:** Each plant may need a specific environment to re-bloom. Usually, increasing sunlight just a little can encourage the plant to set flowers. Use an all-purpose 20-20-20 fertilizer about every other watering at half strength for as long as it is actively growing. It is best to look up your specific plant in a garden book (or online) for more information.

Our houseplants have a 45 day return opportunity with your receipt (bonsai and discounted items not included). This return opportunity is voided if the plant is repotted by anyone other than our houseplant personnel.