

INDOOR BONSAI

Care Sheet

Most indoor bonsai are plants native to warmer climates. Some of the more common indoor varieties are: Serissa, Brush Cherry, Okinawan Holly, New Zealand Tea, Sub-tropical Elms, Fukien Tea, Ficus varieties, Dwarf Myrtle, Portulacaria, Dwarf Boxwood, Barbados Cherry, Olive, Natal Plum and many others.

WATERING

Proper watering is critical. The basic rule is: allow the soil to dry down between watering, but never allow it to become bone dry.

Under-watering and over-watering are both problems. Under-watering is not watering often enough or well enough. Over-watering is watering too often. Under-watering is most likely to occur in the summer while over-watering occurs most often in the winter.

Feel the surface of the soil regularly. If the soil is dry (or you think that it will become dry before you have a chance to check it again) then it is time to water. Water from above until the soil is well soaked. During hot dry weather your tree will need frequent watering. Direct sunlight and wind can cause the soil to dry out rapidly. Very small bonsai in small pots can sometimes dry out in a day or even hours. Be alert to changing conditions.

Remember: Allow the soil to dry down between waterings, but never allow it to become bone dry. For a more in depth discussion of watering please see our handout "The Art of Watering."

TEMPERATURE

Most indoor bonsai love the summer heat (with ample water). Most do best with winter temperatures between 50 and 65 degrees Fahrenheit (some true tropicals like it a little warmer). Freezing or near freezing temperatures should always be avoided.

LIGHT

Most bonsai need to be grown in very good light. If you can, put your indoor bonsai outdoors in the late spring, summer and early fall. Filtered sun, or morning sun is best for most varieties.

When indoors keep your bonsai in a window or very close to one. If you cannot provide enough light in the winter, we suggest supplementing with grow lights.

FRESH AIR

Air circulation is very important. Open the window or get your bonsai outside on warm days. When you cannot open windows, we suggest using an oscillating fan for several hours a day.

FERTILIZING

Your indoor bonsai does best with frequent feeding during the growing season (February through October).

We recommend organic rather than chemical fertilizer. We use Green King pellets. Scatter them on the surface or gently push them into the soil. Apply about one pellet per square inch of soil surface. Pellets last about one month. For a richer mix, supplement with a fish based fertilizer every two weeks.

PEST PREVENTION

Clean your bonsai once a week by removing dead or unhealthy foliage. Wash each time you water by running the water through the foliage. Misting is useful when the air is dry, as it provides extra moisture and helps keep the foliage clean. If you detect pests treat with a mild insecticide every three or four days until the infestation is cleared up. For serious infestations consult a professional.

REPOTTING AND STYLING

Most bonsai need to be repotted every two or three years. Occasional trimming will also be necessary to keep your bonsai looking good. We recommend consulting a good book or a bonsai professional (or competent enthusiast) for advice.

Thank you, enjoy your bonsai and don't forget to water.

If you have any question please call, write or drop by:

Little Red Riding Hood Nursery

4006 34th Street | Lubbock, TX 79410

P 806.795.4834 | F 806.795.5420

www.littlerednursery.com