

Care and Management Practices of Peace Lily (*Spathiphyllum wallisii* Regel)

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Peace lily (*Spathiphyllum wallisii* Regel) is a member of the family Araceae and one of the most popular indoor houseplants (Sardoei,2014). Interest in peace lily is steadily increasing as it is a shade tolerant indoor plant, easy-care with dark green foliage and white spathes. The showy white spathes of *Spathiphyllum* enhance its popularity and market niche as a flowering foliage plant (Henny *et al.*, 2004). It is known for its air-purifying qualities and ease of care, making it a perfect choice for both novice and experienced gardeners. In this article, we will explore the essential aspects of caring for and managing a Peace Lily to keep it healthy and thriving.

1. Understanding the Peace Lily

Before diving into the care routine, it's essential to understand the basic characteristics of the Peace Lily.

Native to the tropical rainforests of Central and South America, Peace Lilies thrive in warm, humid environments. They are not true lilies but belong to the Araceae family, which includes other popular houseplants like Philodendron and Monstera.



Peace Lilies are known for their glossy, dark green leaves and striking white flowers that resemble a calla lily. The "flowers" are actually specialized leaves called spathes, which surround a spiky structure called the spadix, where the true

flowers are located.

2. Light Requirements

Peace Lilies prefer bright, indirect light. Direct sunlight can scorch their leaves, causing them to turn yellow or brown. However, they can tolerate low light conditions, which is why they are often found in offices and rooms with minimal natural light. To keep your Peace Lily thriving, place it near a window with

filtered light or in a well-lit room. If the leaves start to yellow, it may be a sign of too much direct sunlight, and the plant should be moved to a shadier spot.

3. Watering Routine

Proper watering is crucial for the health of a Peace Lily. These plants prefer consistently moist soil but can suffer from root rot if overwatered. To strike the right balance:

- **Check the soil:** Before watering, check the top inch of soil. If it feels dry to the touch, it's time to water. If it's still moist, wait a few more days.
- **Water thoroughly:** When watering, add water until it starts to drain out of the bottom of the pot. This ensures that the entire root system gets hydrated.
- **Avoid waterlogging:** Ensure the pot has drainage holes to prevent water from sitting at the bottom, which can lead to root rot.

Peace Lilies are also sensitive to chlorine and other chemicals found in tap water. Using filtered or distilled water can help prevent the leaves from developing brown tips.

4. Humidity and Temperature

As tropical plants, Peace Lilies thrive in environments with high humidity. Dry air can cause the leaves to dry out and turn brown at the edges. To maintain adequate humidity:

- **Mist The Leaves:** Regularly mist the leaves with water to increase humidity around the plant.
- **Use A Humidity Tray:** Place the pot on a tray filled with pebbles and water. As the water evaporates, it increases the humidity around the plant.
- **Group Plants Together:** Placing your Peace Lily near other plants can create a microclimate with higher humidity.

In terms of temperature, Peace Lilies prefer a range of 65°F to 80°F (18°C to 27°C). They are sensitive to cold drafts and sudden temperature changes, so keep them away from open windows or air conditioning vents.

5. Soil and Repotting

Peace Lilies prefer well-draining, rich soil. A standard potting mix with added perlite or sand works well. Repotting should be done every one to two years, depending on the plant's growth.

- **Choose The Right Pot:** Select a pot that is 1-2 inches larger in diameter than the current one. Ensure it has drainage holes.
- **Repotting Process:** Gently remove the plant from its current pot, being careful not to damage the roots. Place it in the new pot, add fresh soil around the roots, and water thoroughly.
- **When To Repot:** Repotting is best done in spring or early summer when the plant is actively growing.

6. Fertilization

Peace Lilies do not require heavy feeding but benefit from regular fertilization during the growing season (spring and summer). Use a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer every 4-6 weeks.

- **Dilute The Fertilizer:** Always dilute the fertilizer to half the recommended strength to avoid over-fertilization, which can cause leaf burn.
- **Stop Fertilizing In Winter:** Reduce or stop fertilizing during the fall and winter when the plant's growth slows down.

7. Pruning And Maintenance

Pruning is an essential part of Peace Lily care to maintain its appearance and health. Regularly remove yellowing or browning leaves to encourage new growth.

- **Deadheading:** Remove spent flowers by cutting the stalks at the base of the plant. This not only improves the plant's appearance but also encourages more blooms.
- **Cleaning The Leaves:** Wipe the leaves with a damp cloth to remove dust and keep them looking shiny and healthy.

8. Common Problems and Solutions

Peace Lilies are generally low-maintenance, but like all plants, they can encounter some issues. Here are common problems and how to address them:

- **Yellow Leaves:** This can be caused by overwatering, underwatering or too much direct sunlight. Adjust the watering schedule and move the plant to a location with indirect light.
- **Brown Leaf Tips:** Brown tips are often a sign of low humidity or fluoride in tap water. Increase humidity and use filtered water.
- **Wilting:** Wilting can occur due to underwatering or overwatering. Check the soil moisture and adjust watering accordingly.
- **No Blooms:** If your Peace Lily is not blooming, it might not be getting enough light. Move it to a brighter location, but avoid direct sunlight.

9. Propagation

Peace Lilies can be easily propagated by division. This is best done during repotting.

- **Remove The Plant From The Pot:** Gently remove the Peace Lily from its pot and examine the root system.

References

1. Henny, R. J., Norman, D. J., and Chen, J. (2004). Progress in ornamental aroid breeding research. *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden*, 464-472.

- **Divide The Plant:** Use a sharp knife to divide the plant into smaller sections, each with its own roots and leaves.
- **Repot The Divisions:** Plant each division in its own pot with fresh soil and water thoroughly.

10. Toxicity Warning

Peace Lilies contain calcium oxalate crystals, which are toxic to pets and humans if ingested. Symptoms include mouth irritation, drooling and difficulty swallowing. If you have pets or young children, place the plant out of reach or consider choosing a non-toxic alternative.

11. Peace Lily Varieties

There are several varieties of Peace Lilies, ranging in size and leaf shape. Some popular varieties include:

- **Spathiphyllum 'Mauna Loa':** Known for its large leaves and flowers, this variety is often used in indoor landscaping.
- **Spathiphyllum 'Sensation':** The largest variety, with leaves that can grow up to 20 inches long.
- **Spathiphyllum 'Domino':** A unique variety with variegated leaves, featuring white streaks and spots.

Conclusion

Peace Lilies are beautiful, easy-to-care-for plants that can brighten up any indoor space. By following the care tips outlined in this article, we can ensure our Peace Lily remains healthy and vibrant for years to come.

2. Sardoei, A. S., Rahbarian, P., and Shahdadneghad, M. (2014). Evaluation chlorophyll contents assessment on three indoor ornamental plants with plant growth regulators. *European Journal of Experimental Biology*, 4(2), 306-310.