

# HOW TO REPOT

## DOES THE PLANT NEED REPOTTING?

- IF the plant requires water more frequently than before
- IF the plant looks top-heavy in its container
- IF the roots are growing out of the drainage hole

## THEN IT MAY NEED A LARGER POT

STEP 1: Remove the plant from its old container by spreading your fingers over the surface of the soil and turning the plant upside down. Larger plants can be placed on their sides and pulled gently from their pots. If the root ball does not drop into your hand or slide out easily, tap the sides and bottom of the pot to loosen the soil. A plant that is extremely potbound may require that you run a long knife blade around the inside of the pot to loosen the grip of the outer roots on the container.

Examine the root system to determine if a larger pot is needed. Most plants do not require a larger container until they have filled most of the outer area of the soil ball with roots.

STEP 2: Select a new container that is slightly deeper than and about one inch larger in diameter than, the plant's rootball. Too large a container does not stimulate any more root development than a pot that is just one size up, and does increase the dangers of overwatering.

Place broken clay or pieces of window screen over the drainage holes to keep the soil from washing out. Containers without drainage holes are not recommended; however, if used, be sure to put ample drainage material in the bottom.

STEP 3: Put a small layer of potting medium in the bottom of the new pot. Gently loosen the outer roots with your fingers so they can grow into the new soil. A very tightly matted root ball can be scored in several places and across the bottom with a sharp knife or razor blade to get you started. Also trim off any dead roots or those that are dark brown or mushy.

Set the root ball in the pot and fill in the space around it with more potting medium, firming gently as you fill. Do not add potting medium to the top of the original rootball unless you are replacing medium lost during transplanting. Always plant at the original soil level.

STEP 4: Water gently and thoroughly to settle the new potting medium, adding additional medium as needed. Let your plant settle in to its new container by keeping it in bright diffused light. It will probably require less frequent watering, and should not be fertilized until the plant begins to actively grow again.

## HELPFUL HINTS:

- Make sure the rootball is slightly damp (not too wet or too dry) before removing it from the original container.
- Unless a plant is in desperate need of more room, all repotting should be done at the beginning of the growing season, usually late March or early April.
- Try to match the new potting medium to the original—a sandy soil, a peaty mix, etc.
- Never add yard soil to your potting medium as it may contain harmful pathogens or insects.