

Carnivorous Plant Care

Carnivorous plants are fascinating marvels of nature—these remarkable plants have evolved unique adaptations to capture and digest insects and other small organisms, supplementing their nutrient intake in environments where the soil is poor. From the iconic Venus flytrap with its snapping jaws to the sundew's glistening, sticky tentacles, carnivorous plants showcase a stunning diversity of forms and mechanisms. Whether you're a seasoned plant enthusiast or a curious beginner, delving into the world of carnivorous plants is a fun and rewarding experience!



PLANT SELECTION

Beginner Plants

- Sundew
- Pitcher Plant
- Butterwort

Intermediate Plants

- Venus Flytrap
- Asian Pitcher
- Cobra Lily

Outdoor Growing

- Venus Flytrap
- Pitcher Plant (expert yellow-jacket catchers!)
- Cold-Hardy Sundew
- Cobra Lily

Indoor Growing

- Tropical Sundew (great to trap/eat fruit flies around composts and fruit bowls!)
- Asian Pitcher Plant
- Mexican Butterwort



SUNLIGHT

- **Provide at least 3–4 hours of direct sunlight daily:**
 - » Outdoor plants: 4–6+ hours of sun
 - » Indoor: Bright, sunny window facing east/west/south
- **Flytraps and Sarracenia** are not recommended for indoor growing; often perish from lack of sunlight.



WATER

- **Keep soil consistently moist;** not wet (bog-like conditions).
- **High humidity is ideal;** best grown in a container with large tray under the pot filled with water.
- **Use water with no chlorine and low mineral content;** for best results, use distilled/filtered water or rainwater.
- **Some plants prefer moving water** (e.g. Cobra Lilies); if growing in pond or fountain, keep water level below plant's crown, about halfway up the pot.



SOIL

- **Use equal parts peat moss and perlite,** pumice or washed river sand. Never use potting soil or garden dirt; plants are sensitive to fertilizers and minerals.
- **Repot** in late Winter or early Spring.



TEMPERATURE

- **Hardy carnivorous plants require 3–4 months of dormancy** triggered by temperatures below 50°F and shorter daylight hours. During dormancy, plants:
 - » Slow in growth and leaves turn brown around edges
 - » Must remain in standing water to keep soil moist
 - » Can tolerate overnight frosts with little protection (containers are more vulnerable to freezing). To avoid frost burn, protect plants during extended periods below 20°F or during freezing temps and wind—cover with tarp or move into unheated garage/shed.
- **When temperatures go above 35°F,** uncover plants and return outdoors. In early Spring when plants start to regrow, remove old foliage.
- **Plants are extremely heat-tolerant,** but be sure to:
 - » Avoid prolonged soil temperatures above 100°F
 - » Cool roots in containers during extreme heat—water plants 1–2 times daily with cool water and/or move into more mild location



FERTILIZER

- **Carnivorous plants are sensitive** to fertilizers and minerals; they generally prefer to get nutrients from the bugs that they eat.
 - » For outdoor plants: Feed only if needed; they usually catch plenty of insects on their own
 - » For indoor plants: Occasional fertilizer okay; urea-free formula for orchids or bromeliads diluted to ½ strength
- **Do not feed meat to plants,** only freshly caught insects.



PESTS & DISEASE

- **Carnivorous plants can be prone to:** Aphids, scale, mealybugs, slugs (outdoor plants), and fungal diseases (mainly grey mold) from poor air circulation
- **Use Neem Oil** for insects and fungus.
- **Use Slug Magic** for slugs.