

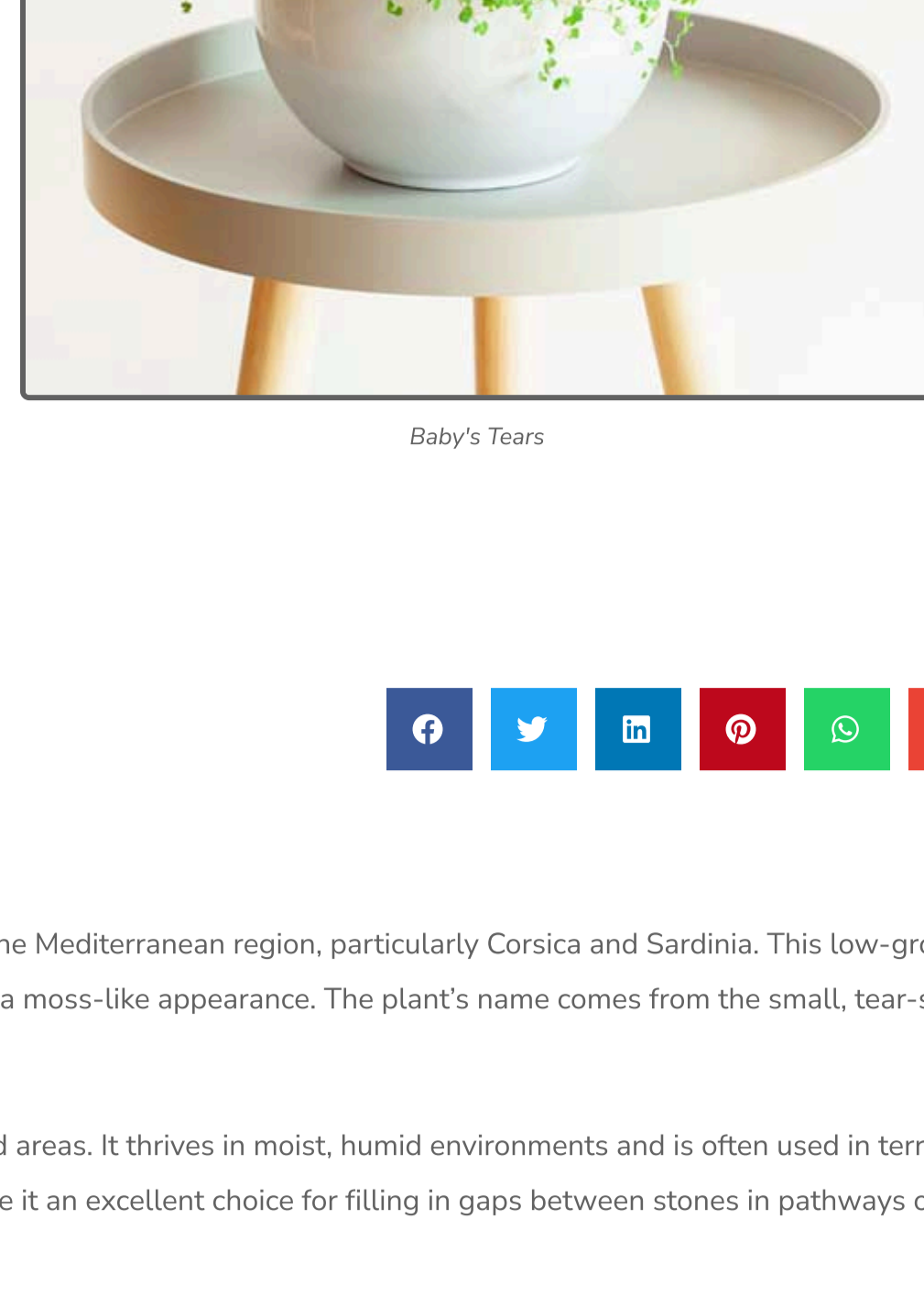
Baby's Tears Plant Care Guide

HOME → HOUSEPLANTS → BABY'S TEARS PLANT CARE GUIDE

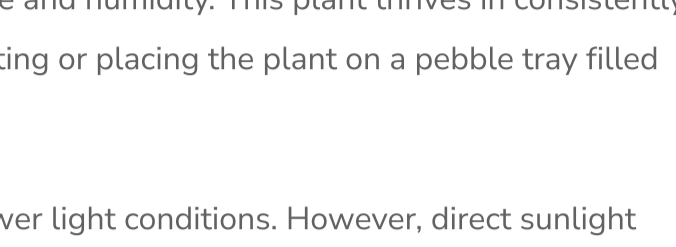
About Baby's Tears

In this Article

- Introduction
- Care & Growing Guide
- Soil
- Fertilizer
- Watering
- Lighting
- Temperature
- Humidity
- Propagation
- Potting
- Pruning
- Blooming
- Pest and Disease Problems
- Special Features
- Plant Benefits
- Additional Information
- Life Cycle
- Toxicity
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Can I Grow this plant
- Botanical details
- Tell me a plant joke



Baby's Tears



Baby's Tears Introduction

Baby's Tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii*) is a delicate and charming creeping plant native to the Mediterranean region, particularly Corsica and Sardinia. This low-growing perennial is known for its tiny, round leaves that form a dense mat of foliage, giving it a moss-like appearance. The plant's name comes from the small, tear-shaped leaves that cover its thin, fragile stems.

Baby's Tears is prized for its ability to create a lush, carpet-like ground cover in shaded areas. It thrives in moist, humid environments and is often used in terrariums, fairy gardens, and as a houseplant. The plant's rapid growth and spreading habit make it an excellent choice for filling in gaps between stones in pathways or as a living mulch beneath larger plants.

While primarily grown for its foliage, Baby's Tears does produce tiny, inconspicuous flowers. These blooms are so small that they are often overlooked, adding to the plant's overall delicate and ethereal appearance. In ideal conditions, this plant can spread quickly, forming a thick, soft mat that can be quite beautiful, when properly maintained.

Baby's Tears Care & Growing Guide

Caring for Baby's Tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii*) requires attention to its specific needs, particularly in terms of moisture and humidity. This plant thrives in consistently moist soil and high humidity environments, making it an excellent choice for terrariums or bathrooms. Regular misting or placing the plant on a pebble tray filled with water can help maintain the humidity levels it craves.

Lighting is another crucial factor in the care of Baby's Tears. While it prefers bright, indirect light, it can tolerate lower light conditions. However, direct sunlight should be avoided as it can scorch the delicate leaves. In outdoor settings, it's best suited for shaded areas where it can receive dappled sunlight.

Fertilization should be done sparingly, as Baby's Tears is not a heavy feeder. A diluted, balanced liquid fertilizer applied monthly during the growing season is usually sufficient. Overfeeding can lead to excessive growth and potential burning of the delicate roots. Regular pruning is essential to maintain the plant's shape and prevent it from becoming too dense, which can lead to poor air circulation and potential fungal issues.

Soil

Baby's Tears thrives in a well-draining, consistently moist soil rich in organic matter. The ideal soil composition is a mix of peat moss, perlite, and loamy soil, which provides both moisture retention and good drainage. The preferred pH range is slightly acidic to neutral, between 6.0 and 7.0.

For optimal growth, ensure the soil remains evenly moist but not waterlogged. Adding organic matter such as compost or well-rotted manure can improve soil structure and nutrient content. A layer of fine gravel or sand at the bottom of the pot can enhance drainage.

Soil problems to watch for include:

1. Poor drainage: Can lead to root rot. Improve by adding perlite or coarse sand.
2. Compaction: Restricts root growth. Loosen soil gently and consider repotting.
3. Inappropriate pH: Can affect nutrient uptake. Test soil and adjust with lime (to raise pH) or sulfur (to lower pH).
4. Salt build-up: Can occur from over-fertilization. Flush soil thoroughly with water.
5. Nutrient deficiencies: May cause yellowing leaves. Address with balanced, diluted fertilizer.
6. Root boundiness: Can occur in small pots. Repot to a slightly larger container when roots become visible at drainage holes.

Fertilizer

Baby's Tears has moderate fertilizer needs. During the growing season (spring and summer), feed every 2-4 weeks with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half strength.

Recommended fertilizer: 10-10-10 or 20-20-20 NPK ratio

Signs of over-fertilization:

- Brown leaf tips
- Wilting despite moist soil
- White crust on soil surface

Signs of under-fertilization:

- Pale or yellowing leaves
- Slow growth
- Small new leaves

Organic alternatives:

- Compost tea
- Diluted fish emulsion
- Seaweed extract

Baby's Tears is particularly sensitive to phosphorus, so avoid high-phosphorus fertilizers. If using organic fertilizers, apply less frequently (every 4-6 weeks) as they release nutrients more slowly. Always water the plant before fertilizing to prevent root burn.

Watering

Baby's Tears requires consistently moist soil but is sensitive to overwatering. Water when the top inch of soil feels slightly dry to the touch. Use room temperature water, preferably filtered or rainwater, as this plant can be sensitive to chemicals in tap water.

Signs of underwatering:

- Wilting or drooping leaves
- Dry, crispy leaf edges
- Slow growth

Signs of overwatering:

- Yellowing leaves
- Mushy stems
- Mold on soil surface

Watering needs may increase during active growth in spring and summer, and decrease in fall and winter. Always ensure good drainage to prevent waterlogging. In high humidity environments like terrariums, less frequent watering may be needed. Consider using a moisture meter for more accurate watering.

Lighting

Baby's Tears prefers bright, indirect light but can tolerate lower light conditions. Ideal placement is near a north or east-facing window where it receives filtered sunlight. Direct sunlight, especially during hot afternoons, can scorch the delicate leaves.

Signs of insufficient light include:

- Elongated, spindly growth
- Pale or yellowing leaves
- Slow growth

Signs of excessive light include:

- Browning or crispy leaf edges
- Faded or bleached appearance
- Wilting despite adequate watering

If natural light is suboptimal, consider using artificial grow lights. Fluorescent or LED grow lights placed 6-12 inches above the plant for 12-14 hours a day can supplement natural light. In overly bright conditions, use sheer curtains or move the plant further from the light source to provide protection.

Temperature

Baby's Tears prefers moderate temperatures between 60°F to 75°F (15°C to 24°C). It can tolerate slightly cooler temperatures but should be protected from frost.

Tips for temperature management:

1. Avoid placing near drafty windows or heating/cooling vents
2. Move indoor plants away from cold windows in winter
3. Provide extra humidity in dry, heated indoor environments
4. If grown outdoors, bring inside or provide protection when temperatures drop below 50°F (10°C)

Baby's Tears is sensitive to sudden temperature changes. Gradual acclimation is key when moving the plant between different temperature zones. In hot weather, increase humidity and watering frequency. In cold weather, reduce watering and keep the plant away from cold drafts.

Humidity

Baby's Tears thrives in high humidity environments, preferring levels between 60-80%. This makes it an excellent choice for terrariums or bathrooms.

To increase humidity:

1. Use a pebble tray filled with water
2. Mist the plant regularly
3. Group with other humidity-loving plants
4. Use a room humidifier

To decrease humidity (rarely necessary):

1. Improve air circulation with a fan
2. Reduce misting frequency
3. Move to a less humid room

Symptoms of low humidity stress:

- Crispy, brown leaf edges
- Leaf drop
- Slowed growth

Symptoms of excessive humidity:

- Fungal growth on leaves or soil
- Soft, mushy growth

For Baby's Tears, pebble trays and regular misting are particularly effective methods. Avoid misting late in the day to prevent water sitting on leaves overnight, which can promote fungal growth.

Propagation

Baby's Tears can be easily propagated through division or stem cuttings. Here's a step-by-step guide:

Method 1: Division

1. Gently remove the plant from its pot
2. Separate the root ball into smaller sections, ensuring each has roots and stems
3. Plant each division in a small pot with fresh, moist potting mix
4. Keep the soil consistently moist and provide high humidity
5. New growth should appear within 2-3 weeks

Method 2: Stem Cuttings

1. Cut 2-3 inch sections of healthy stems
2. Remove lower leaves, leaving 2-3 sets at the top
3. Place cuttings in a small container of water or moist potting mix
4. Maintain high humidity by covering with a clear plastic bag
5. Roots should develop in 1-2 weeks
6. Once rooted, transfer to small pots with potting mix

Both methods have high success rates, with division being slightly more reliable. Spring and early summer are the best times for propagation. New plants typically establish within 4-6 weeks.

Potting

Baby's Tears benefits from being slightly root-bound, so choose a pot only 1-2 inches larger than the current one when repotting. Use a shallow, wide pot to accommodate its spreading habit.

Pot type: Plastic or glazed ceramic with drainage holes

Soil mix: Equal parts peat moss, perlite, and potting soil

Repotting frequency: Every 2-3 years or when roots are visible at drainage holes

Signs that repotting is needed:

- Roots growing out of drainage holes
- Water running straight through the pot
- Slowed growth despite proper care

Repotting steps:

1. Water the plant a day before repotting
2. Gently remove from current pot
3. Loosen roots and trim any damaged ones
4. Place in new pot with fresh soil mix
5. Water thoroughly and place in a shaded area for a few days

Root pruning is generally not necessary for Baby's Tears. When repotting, handle the delicate roots gently to minimize stress.

Pruning

1. Timing: Prune Baby's Tears as needed throughout the growing season, typically spring and summer.

2. Frequency: Every 4-6 weeks or when the plant becomes overgrown or leggy.

3. Purpose: To maintain shape, promote bushiness, and remove any dead or yellowing foliage.

4. Tools: Use clean, sharp scissors or pruning shears.

5. Preparation: Ensure tools are sterilized with rubbing alcohol to prevent disease spread.

6. Step-by-step guide:

1. Inspect the plant for dead, yellowing, or overgrown areas.
2. Using scissors, trim back overgrown sections to desired length.
3. Remove any dead or yellowing foliage at the base.
4. For leggy growth, cut back stems to encourage bushier growth.
5. Trim any stems that are growing outside the desired shape of the plant.
6. After pruning, lightly mist the plant to reduce stress.

7. Aftercare: Maintain regular watering and increase humidity slightly to help the plant recover.

8. Special considerations: Avoid heavy pruning in late fall or winter when growth is slower.

Blooming

Baby's Tears produces tiny, inconspicuous flowers throughout the growing season, typically from spring to fall. The blooms are so small that they are often overlooked. Optimal conditions for flowering include bright, indirect light and consistent moisture. The flowers do not have any notable characteristics and do not significantly contribute to the plant's ornamental value.

Pests and Diseases

Pests

Common issues

- Spider mites: Tiny webs on leaves, stippling on leaf surfaces, yellowing leaves. Increase humidity, spray with neem oil or insecticidal soap, isolate affected plants
- Mealybugs: White, cottony masses on stems and leaf joints. Remove with cotton swab dipped in alcohol, apply neem oil or insecticidal soap
- Fungus gnats: Small flies around the plant, larvae in soil. Allow soil surface to dry between waterings, use sticky traps, apply neem oil to soil

Diseases

Common issues

- Root rot: Wilting despite moist soil, yellowing leaves, mushy stems. Increase humidity, spray with neem oil or insecticidal soap, repot in fresh, well-draining soil, reduce watering
- Powdery mildew: White, powdery coating on leaves. Improve air circulation, apply fungicide, remove severely affected leaves
- Leaf spot: Brown or black spots on leaves. Remove affected leaves, avoid overhead watering, apply copper-based fungicide

Special Features

Baby's Tears is prized for its delicate, moss-like appearance and ability to create a lush, carpet-like ground cover. Its tiny, round leaves form a dense mat that can cascade beautifully over the edges of containers or terrariums. The plant's rapid growth and spreading habit make it an excellent choice for filling in gaps between stones in pathways or as a living mulch beneath larger plants.

Plant Benefits

While Baby's Tears is not known for traditional herbal or pharmaceutical benefits, it does contribute to improving indoor air quality by increasing humidity levels. The plant's dense foliage can help trap dust particles, potentially benefiting those with allergies or respiratory issues when used in moderation.

Additional Information

Baby's Tears is often used in Japanese gardens and can be a great addition to fairy gardens due to its miniature appearance. While it's primarily grown as an ornamental plant, some cultures have used it in traditional medicine for minor wound healing, though scientific evidence for this use is limited.

Life Cycle

Baby's Tears is a perennial plant that can live for several years with proper care. It has a rapid growth rate during the warm seasons, slowing down in winter. The plant reproduces both through seed dispersal and vegetative propagation, with stems rooting where they touch the soil. In ideal conditions, it can quickly spread to form a dense mat. Regular pruning and division are often necessary to control its growth and maintain its appearance.

Are Baby's Tears Poisonous, Toxic

Baby's Tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii*) is generally considered non-toxic to humans, cats, and dogs. However, ingestion may cause mild gastrointestinal upset in some cases. While severe toxicity is unlikely, it's always best to prevent pets and children from consuming any part of the plant. If ingestion occurs, monitor for symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea. If symptoms persist or worsen, consult a healthcare professional or veterinarian. To prevent accidental ingestion, keep the plant out of reach of pets and children, and consider using deterrent sprays for curious pets.

Frequently Asked Questions

- How often should I water Baby's Tears?**
Baby's Tears prefers consistently moist soil. Water when the top inch of soil feels slightly dry, typically every 2-3 days, adjusting based on environmental conditions.
- Is Baby's Tears toxic to pets?**
Baby's Tears is generally considered non-toxic to pets, but ingestion may cause mild gastrointestinal upset in some cases.
- How much light does Baby's Tears need?**
Baby's Tears prefers bright, indirect light but can tolerate lower light conditions. Avoid direct sunlight as it can scorch the delicate leaves.
- How do I propagate Baby's Tears?**
Baby's Tears can be easily propagated through division or stem cuttings. Both methods have high success rates, especially when done in spring or early summer.
- Why is my Baby's Tears plant turning yellow?**
Yellowing leaves can be caused by overwatering, underwatering, or insufficient light. Check the soil moisture and adjust watering accordingly, and ensure the plant is receiving adequate indirect light.
- How often should I fertilize Baby's Tears?**
Fertilize Baby's Tears every 2-4 weeks during the growing season (spring and summer) with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half strength.
- Can Baby's Tears be grown outdoors?**
Yes, Baby's Tears can be grown outdoors in shaded areas in USDA hardiness zones 9-11. In colder regions, it's best grown as an annual or brought indoors during winter.
- How do I increase humidity for my Baby's Tears plant?**
Increase humidity by using a pebble tray filled with water, misting the plant regularly, grouping it with other plants, or using a room humidifier.
- How often should I repot my Baby's Tears plant?**
Repot Baby's Tears every 2-3 years or when roots are visible at drainage holes. Use a pot only 1-2 inches larger than the current one. The plant prefers to be slightly root-bound.
- Why is my Baby's Tears plant not growing?**
Slow growth can be due to insufficient light, improper watering, or lack of nutrients. Ensure the plant is receiving bright, indirect light, proper watering, and regular fertilization during the growing season.

Can I grow Baby's Tears in my indoor space

Difficulty	Size	Light	Water	Flowering	Pet Safe	Air Purifier
Intermediate	Small	Medium	High	Yes	Yes	Low

Soleirolia soleirolii botanical details

Common Name	Botanical Name	Family Name	Genus	Kingdom
Baby's Tears	<i>Soleirolia soleirolii</i>	Urticaceae	Soleirolia	Plantae
Other Common Names	Native Area	Plant Type		
Mind-Your-Own-Business, Irish Moss, Corsican Curse	Mediterranean region, particularly Corsica and Sardinia	Perennial		

My Baby's Tears Plant Care Recommendations

- ✓ Perky Plant fertilizer: <https://amzn.to/3RtLA00>
- ✓ Seaweed extract: <https://amzn.to/3z2CsFh>
- ✓ Rooting hormone: <https://amzn.to/3uX0t>
- ✓ Espoma fertilizer: <https://amzn.to/3vPa9bs>
- ✓ Worm compost: <https://amzn.to/3HVL01u>
- ✓ Full-spectrum Light Bulb-Large: <https://amzn.to/3YR6VBu>
- ✓ Full-spectrum Lighting: <https://amzn.to/3qhhav>
- ✓ Light meter: <https://amzn.to/4dmp3s>
- ✓ Moisture meter: <https://amzn.to/3TEU5N>
- ✓ Hygrometer: <https://amzn.to/3Cf6h2F>
- ✓ Pruning shears: <https://amzn.to/3X6oQcg>
- ✓ ProMix Potting Soil: <https://amzn.to/3VlrgE>
- ✓ My Organic Green Gourmet Houseplant Fertilizer: <https://amzn.to/3VlrgE>
- ✓ My Perfect Pumice: <https://amzn.to/3VlrgE>
- ✓ My Organic Green Gourmet Houseplant Fertilizer: <https://amzn.to/3VlrgE>

Buy Baby's Tears Online

Baby's Tears

As an Amazon Associate, I earn commission from qualifying purchases.

Plant Puns and Jokes

Why did the Baby's Tears plant go to therapy? It had too many issues with its roots!

Join Our Newsletter Your email address

Join my Happy Indoor Gardener email list. My monthly newsletter teaches you all about growing a beautiful indoor garden. There are also contests and giveaways, and you get a FREE COPY of 11 Easy to Grow, Low Light Houseplants as a thank you for signing up.

First Name

Last Name