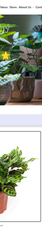
Calathea Makoyana Care Guide

About Peacock Plant

In this Article

- Peacock Plant Information
- Care & Growing Guide
- Light
- Temperature
- Watering
- Soil
- Fertilizer
- Propagation
- Potting
- Pruning
- Blooming
- Pests and Diseases
- Toxic and Poisonous
- Plant Benefits
- Additional Information
- Life Cycle
- Quick Care Instructions
- Can I Grow this plant
- Personal Notes
- Tell me a plant Joke



Peacock Plant

Share: Facebook Twitter Pinterest Mail Print

Peacock Plant Introduction

The Peacock Plant (Calathea makoyana) is a stunning tropical perennial known for its vivid foliage that resembles the intricate patterns of a peacock's feathers. Native to the rainforests of southern Brazil, this plant has gained popularity as a houseplant due to its striking appearance and air purifying qualities.

The Peacock Plant features large, oval-shaped leaves with intricate patterns of light green, dark green, and pink/purple undersides. The leaves are marked with feather-like designs in various shades of green, creating a mesmerizing visual effect. This plant is part of the prayer plant family, known for its nyctinastic movement - the leaves fold up at night and open again in the morning, resembling folded hands in prayer.

As its natural habitat, the Peacock Plant thrives in warm, humid conditions. It prefers bright, indirect sunlight, consistent moisture, making it an ideal choice for indoor gardens or terrariums. The plant is also known for its ability to act as a natural air purifier, removing toxins from the air and improving indoor air quality.

Peacock Plant Care & Growing Guide

Caring for a Peacock Plant requires attention to its specific needs and is considered to maintaining proper environmental conditions. These plants are known for being somewhat finicky, but with the right care, they can thrive and produce stunning foliage that adds beauty to any indoor space.

Light and humidity are the Peacock Plant's primary delights. Indirect light, Direct sunlight can scorch its delicate leaves, while too little light can cause the plant to lose its vibrant colors. A north or east-facing window is often ideal. The plant also requires high humidity, similar to its native tropical environment. Regular misting, using a pebble tray, or placing a humidifier nearby can help maintain the necessary moisture levels.

Watering is another crucial aspect of Peacock Plant care. The plant does not tolerate overwatering, preferring to dry slightly between waterings. The leaves are marked with feather-like designs in various shades of green, creating a mesmerizing visual effect. The plant is part of the prayer plant family, known for its nyctinastic movement - the leaves fold up at night and open again in the morning.

As its natural habitat, the Peacock Plant thrives in warm conditions, typically between 65-75°F (18-24°C). It is sensitive to temperature fluctuations and should be kept away from drafts and extreme temperatures. The plant is also known for its ability to act as a natural air purifier, removing toxins from the air and improving indoor air quality.

Soil

The Peacock Plant thrives in well-draining, rich, and slightly acidic soil. The ideal soil composition is a mix of peat moss, perlite, and regular potting soil in equal parts. This combination provides good aeration, moisture retention, and nutrient availability. The optimal pH range for Peacock Plants is between 6.0 and 6.5, slightly on the acidic side.

Good drainage is crucial for preventing root rot, a common issue with these plants. The soil should retain some moisture but allow excess water to drain freely. Adding orchid bark or charcoal to the mix can improve drainage.

Peacock Plants benefit from soil rich in organic matter. Adding compost or well-rotted manure can enhance soil fertility. However, avoid using heavy, clay-like soils that can become compacted and hinder root growth.

Soil problems to watch out for include:

- Compaction: Which can restrict root growth and aeration.
- Contaminants: Pesticides and pathogens in poor quality soil.
- Inappropriate pH: Can affect nutrient uptake.
- Salt build-up: Often from over-fertilization, can damage roots.
- Nutrient deficiencies: May occur in poor quality soil.
- Pest infestations: Can occur if the soil is not properly sterilized.

Regularly checking the soil condition and making when necessary can help prevent these issues and maintain optimal growing conditions for your Peacock Plant.

Fertilizer

Peacock Plants benefit from regular fertilization during their active growing seasons. Typically, these plants thrive on a monthly feed, using a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half the recommended strength every 2-3 weeks.

Choose a fertilizer with an NPK ratio of 2-1-1 or 3-1-2, which provides a good balance of nutrients for foliage growth. Alternatively, you can use a fertilizer specifically formulated for tropical plants.

Signs of over-fertilization include:

- Brown or burnt leaf tips.
- Wilting despite adequate watering.
- White crust on soil surface.
- Stunted growth.

Signs of under-fertilization include:

- Pale or yellow leaves (especially older leaves).
- Slow or stunted growth.
- Smaller new leaves.

Organic fertilizer alternatives include:

- Compost tea.
- Worm castings.
- Fish emulsion (can sparingly be used, diluted).

Peacock Plants are particularly sensitive to fluoride and can develop brown leaf tips if exposed to high levels. If using tap water, let it sit overnight before using it, or consider using filtered water.

During the dormant period, when growth slows, reduce fertilization to once every 6-8 weeks or stop altogether.

If you notice signs of nutrient deficiency, such as pale or yellow leaves, consider adjusting your fertilizer. Conversely, if you observe signs of over-fertilization, such as brown leaf tips, reduce the plant thoroughly before applying fertilizer to prevent root burn.

Watering

Peacock Plants prefer consistently moist soil but are sensitive to overwatering. The key is to keep the soil lightly moist, never allowing it to dry out completely or become waterlogged. Water when the top inch of soil feels dry to the touch.

These plants are sensitive to chemicals often found in tap water. Ideally, use distilled water, rainwater, or water that has been left out overnight to allow chlorine to evaporate. Room temperature water is best, as cold water can shock the plant's roots.

Signs of overwatering include drooping leaves, curling leaf edges, and brown, crispy spots. Overwatering symptoms include yellowing leaves, soft, mushy stems near the soil line, and mold on the soil surface.

Watering needs may change seasonally. During the growing season (spring and summer), the plant may need more frequent watering. In winter, when growth slows, reduce watering frequency but don't allow the soil to dry out completely.

Humidity is as important as watering for Peacock Plants. Regular misting or using a humidifier can help maintain the high humidity these plants prefer. Moisture-loving plants like ferns or orchids can also be grouped together to create a humid micro-climate.

Lighting

The Peacock Plant thrives in bright, indirect light. It's best to place it near a north or east-facing window or use a sheer filtered curtain. While these plants can tolerate lower light conditions, they may lose their vibrant leaf coloration and become leggy or stretched.

Direct sunlight can scorch the delicate leaves, causing brown spots or bleaching. If you notice your Peacock Plant's leaves curling or developing brown spots, it may be receiving too much direct light. On the other hand, if the plant's growth becomes leggy or the leaf patterns become less pronounced, it might need more light.

A natural light source is ideal for the Peacock Plant, but it can also thrive with artificial lighting. Fluorescent or LED grow lights can be used to provide the necessary light intensity. Place the lights about 12-24 inches above the plant and keep them on for 12-14 hours a day.

Rotating the plant regularly ensures even growth and prevents it from leaning towards the light source. Aim for a quarter turn every two weeks. Remember, while Peacock Plants can adapt to lower light conditions, they won't thrive as though their best colors without adequate, albeit indirect, brightness.

Temperature

Peacock Plants prefer a warm, stable temperature ranging from 65°F to 75°F (18°C to 24°C). They can tolerate slightly higher temperatures but struggle in cooler conditions. Consistency is key; these plants don't respond well to sudden temperature fluctuations.

- temperatures below 60°F (15°C), growth slows down, and leaves can develop brown edges or spots. Prolonged exposure to temperatures below 50°F (10°C) can cause significant damage or even death.
- temperatures above 80°F (27°C), the plant may become stressed, leaning towards its native rainforest conditions. While they can tolerate some heat, it's not their ideal range.

Peacock Plants are sensitive to drafts and temperature fluctuations. Avoid placing them near air conditioners, heaters, or drafty windows. These conditions can stress the plant, leading to leaf drop and other issues.

It's crucial, if outdoors, to bring the Peacock Plant indoors when temperatures drop below its preferred range. Even a few hours of cold exposure can damage the plant.

During winter, consider using a heat mat to maintain a warm root zone if your temperature drops.

Remember, Peacock Plants are sensitive to drafts and prefer stable, consistent temperatures. Minor moving the plant or opening windows, do so gradually to allow the plant to acclimate to new temperatures slowly.

Humidity

Peacock Plants thrive in high humidity environments, ideally between 60% to 80%. This mimics their natural tropical habitat. Maintaining proper humidity is crucial for the health and appearance of the plant's foliage.

To increase humidity:

1. Use a pebble tray filled with water placed beneath the plant pot.
2. Mist the leaves regularly, ensuring droplets don't linger for extended periods (to avoid fungal issues).
3. Group plants together to create a microclimate with higher humidity.
4. Use a room humidifier, especially in dry climates or during winter when indoor air tends to be drier.

To decrease humidity (rarely necessary for Peacock Plants):

1. Improve ventilation in the room.
2. Reduce misting frequency.
3. Move the plant to a less humid area of your home.

Symptoms of low humidity stress include:

- Brown, crispy leaf edges.
- Curling leaves.
- Stunted growth.
- Wilted growth.

Symptoms of excessively high humidity (though rare with proper care):

- Mold or mildew on the soil surface.
- Soft, mushy stems or leaves.

Among houseplants, humidity-loving plants like Peacock Plants create a tropical microclimate beneficial to many tropical plants. Pebble trays and misting are two helpful supplemental tips, but not the sufficient on their own in very dry environments. Regular monitoring with a hygrometer can help ensure optimal humidity levels for your Peacock Plant.

Propagation

Propagating Peacock Plants is typically done through division. Here's a step-by-step guide:

1. Choose a healthy, mature plant for propagation.
2. Gently remove the plant from its container to expose its roots.
3. Carefully separate the root ball into sections.
4. Ensure each section has at least one stem and leaf.
5. Plant each division in its own pot, using fresh potting mix.
6. Water thoroughly and place in a warm, humid location with indirect light.
7. Maintain high humidity and consistent moisture for new growth.
8. After 4-6 weeks, you should see signs of new growth, indicating successful propagation.

The best time to propagate Peacock Plants is in spring or early summer when the plant is actively growing. It typically takes 2-3 months for new plants to establish themselves.

While division is the most reliable method, some gardeners have success with stem cuttings or water. However, this method has a lower success rate and takes longer.

Propagation by seeds is possible but rarely done as it's more time-consuming and yields can be difficult to predict.

Remember to be gentle throughout the process, as Peacock Plants have delicate root systems. Providing high humidity and consistent warmth will greatly increase your chances of successful propagation.

Potting

Peacock Plants prefer pots that provide ample drainage and room for growth. Choose a pot 1-2 inches larger in diameter than the current one when repotting. Ensure the new pot has drainage holes to prevent root rot.

Ideal pot materials include:

- Terracotta: Provides good air circulation but dries out quickly.
- Plastic: Retains moisture well, good for those who tend to underwater.
- Ceramic: Offers a balance between moisture retention and breathability.

The root compression should be light and even, bracing. A mix of 1 part peat moss, 1 part perlite, and 1 part regular potting soil works well.

Repot every Peacock Plant every 1-2 years, or when you notice:

- Roots growing out of drainage holes.
- Plant becoming top-heavy or tipping over.
- Soil drying out much faster than usual.
- Stunted growth despite proper care.

To repot:

1. Water the plant a day before to reduce stress.
2. Gently remove the plant from its current pot.
3. Inspect roots and trim any dead or rotting.
4. Place the potting mix in the new pot.
5. Position the plant at the same depth as in its previous pot.
6. Fill in with new potting mix, gently tamping down to remove air pockets.
7. Water thoroughly and place in a suitable location with bright, indirect light.

Avoid repotting during the plant's dormant period. Spring is the ideal time for repotting as the plant enters its active growth phase.

After repotting, the plant may show signs of stress such as drooping leaves. This is normal and should resolve within a week or two as the plant adjusts to its new home.

Pruning

Pruning Reasons and Techniques for Peacock Plants

Why Prune Peacock Plants?

Regular pruning helps maintain the plant's health and appearance.

Frequency:

Prune every 2-3 months or as needed.

Purpose:

To remove damaged or yellowing leaves, control size, and promote bushier growth.

Tools Needed:

- Sterilized scissors or pruning shears.
- Rubbing alcohol for sterilization.

Step-by-Step Guide:

1. Sterilize your pruning tools with rubbing alcohol.
2. Identify leaves that are yellowing, browning, or damaged.
3. Cut these leaves off at the base where they meet the stem.
4. For new growth, cut back longer stems to your desired length.
5. Make cuts just above a node (where leaf meets stem).
6. Remove any dead or decaying plant material.
7. Dispose of pruned material to prevent pests or diseases.

Tips:

- Avoid pruning in direct sunlight to prevent sunburn.
- Gently remove the plant from its current pot.
- Inspect roots and trim any dead or rotting.
- Place the potting mix in the new pot.
- Position the plant at the same depth as in its previous pot.
- Fill in with new potting mix, gently tamping down to remove air pockets.
- Water thoroughly and place in a suitable location with bright, indirect light.

Avoid repotting during the plant's dormant period. Spring is the ideal time for repotting as the plant enters its active growth phase.

After repotting, the plant may show signs of stress such as drooping leaves. This is normal and should resolve within a week or two as the plant adjusts to its new home.

Pruning

Pruning Reasons and Techniques for Peacock Plants

Why Prune Peacock Plants?

Regular pruning helps maintain the plant's health and appearance.

Frequency:

Prune every 2-3 months or as needed.

Purpose:

To remove damaged or yellowing leaves, control size, and promote bushier growth.

Tools Needed:

- Sterilized scissors or pruning shears.
- Rubbing alcohol for sterilization.

Step-by-Step Guide:

1. Sterilize your pruning tools with rubbing alcohol.
2. Identify leaves that are yellowing, browning, or damaged.
3. Cut these leaves off at the base where they meet the stem.
4. For new growth, cut back longer stems to your desired length.
5. Make cuts just above a node (where leaf meets stem).
6. Remove any dead or decaying plant material.
7. Dispose of pruned material to prevent pests or diseases.

Tips:

- Avoid pruning in direct sunlight to prevent sunburn.

Blooming

The Peacock Plant is grown for its striking foliage, not its flowers. It's a tropical perennial, native to the rainforests of southern Brazil. The plant's vibrant leaves are its most prized feature, with intricate patterns of light and dark green, pink, and purple.

While the Peacock Plant does occasionally produce flowers, these are not its main attraction. The blooms are small, white or pale pink, and typically appear in spring or summer. The flowering period is short-lived, and the plant doesn't rebloom frequently. Gardeners cultivating this plant for its ornamental value, not for its flowers, should focus on its foliage rather than its flowers.

Pests and Diseases

Pests

Common Issues:

- Spider mites.
- Mealybugs.
- Scale insects.
- Fungus gnats.

Symptoms:

- Spider mites: Fine webbing on leaves, tiny moving dots, stippled or yellowing leaves.
- Mealybugs: White, cotton-like substance on stems and leaves.
- Scale: Brown, raised, oval-like bumps on stems and leaves.
- Fungus gnats: Small flies around the plant, larvae in the soil.

Treatment:

Isolate infected plants to prevent spread.

For spider mites and mealybugs: Wipe leaves with rubbing alcohol using a cotton ball.

For scale: Remove by hand or use a soft toothbrush dipped in rubbing alcohol.

For fungus gnats: Allow soil to dry out between waterings, use sticky traps, and consider repotting top layer of soil.

Diseases

Common Issues:

- Root rot.
- Leaf spot disease.
- Bacterial blight.

Symptoms:

- Root rot: Yellowing leaves, wilting, stunted growth.
- Leaf spot: Brown or black spots on leaves, often with yellow halos.
- Bacterial blight: Wilting, possible discoloration on leaves.

Treatment:

Prevent: Improve ventilation, avoid overwatering, ensure proper drainage.

Leaf spot: Remove affected leaves, improve air circulation, avoid wetting leaves when watering.

Persistent issues: Consider a fungicide or bactericide, carefully following the label instructions.

Special Features

The Special Features

The Peacock Plant is renowned for its stunning foliage, featuring intricate patterns that resemble peacock feathers. Its leaves perform nectaryody movements, folding up at night and opening during the day, earning it a place in the prayer plant family. The plant's vibrant leaf colors, reminiscent of a peacock's tail, make it a popular choice for adding tropical flair to indoor spaces.

Plant Benefits

While the Peacock Plant is not typically used for herbal or pharmaceutical purposes, it does offer air purifying benefits. It can help remove toxins or pollutants such as formaldehyde, benzene, and trichloroethylene, contributing to a healthier indoor environment. The plant's striking appearance also provides aesthetic benefits, potentially reducing stress and improving mood through its natural beauty.

Additional Information

The Peacock Plant is part of the Marantaceae family, also known as the arrowroot family. This family is known for its rhizomatous habits with cylindrical, horizontal stems that spread underground. The Peacock Plant's ability to move its leaves in response to light and darkness is a fascinating adaptation to its native habitat, where it thrives in dappled sunlight. The movement helps it maximize light absorption while protecting itself from excessive sunlight.

Life Cycle

The Peacock Plant is a perennial that goes through distinct growth phases. In spring and summer, it experiences active growth, producing new leaves and potentially spreading its rhizomes. During fall and winter, growth slows as the plant enters a period dormancy. This is typical for its life cycle and requires adjustments in care, such as reduced watering and fertilization. The plant's ability to adapt to these cycles is a testament to its resilience in its native habitat, where it thrives in dappled sunlight. With the right care, a Peacock Plant can live for several years, continuously producing new leaves and other new structures, ensuring its longevity.

Are Peacock Plant Poisonous, Toxic

The Peacock Plant (Calathea makoyana) is non-toxic to cats, dogs, and humans. Its parts of the plant are known for its poisonous if ingested. However, as with any non-food plant, ingestion may cause mild gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting or diarrhea. While some experts recommend keeping it out of reach of pets and children to prevent any potential digestive issues or damage to the plant, it's generally safe to have around. The vibrant patterns and large, textured leaves make it a popular choice for tropical aesthetic. To prevent any issues, consider placing the plant in an area they're inaccessible to pets and children, or use deterrents such as bitter sprays or a protective cage if they chewing on the leaves.

Frequently Asked Questions

How often should I water my Peacock Plant?

Water your Peacock Plant when the top inch of soil feels dry. This is typically every 7-10 days, but vary based on environmental conditions. Always use room temperature water and avoid letting the plant sit in standing water.

What kind of light does a Peacock Plant need?

The Peacock Plant thrives in bright, indirect light. It's best to place it near a north or east-facing window or use a sheer filtered curtain. While it can tolerate lower light conditions, they may lose their vibrant leaf coloration and become leggy or stretched.

Is the Peacock Plant toxic to pets?

The Peacock Plant is not toxic to cats, dogs, or humans. However, it's still best to keep plants out of reach to prevent any digestive upset from ingestion.

How can I increase humidity for my Peacock Plant?

The Peacock Plant thrives in high humidity. You can increase humidity by misting the leaves regularly, using a humidifier, or placing the plant on a pebble tray with water.

Why are the leaves on my Peacock Plant turning brown?

Brown leaves can indicate various issues, including overwatering, underwatering, sunburn, overfertilizing, or exposure to direct sunlight. Check your care routine and adjust as needed.

How often should I fertilize my Peacock Plant?

Fertilize your Peacock Plant every 2-3 weeks during the growing season (spring and summer) with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half strength. Reduce or stop fertilizing during the dormant period (fall and winter).

Can I propagate my Peacock Plant?

Yes, you can propagate your Peacock Plant through division. The best time to do this is during spring or early summer. Carefully separate the plant into sections, ensuring each section has its own roots and stems.

How often should I repot my Peacock Plant?

Repot your Peacock Plant every 1-2 years or when you notice it becoming pot-bound. The best time to repot is in the spring, at the beginning of the growing season.

Why are the leaves on my Peacock Plant curling?

Curling leaves can indicate various issues, including low humidity, or exposure to cold drafts. Ensure your plant is getting enough water, increase humidity if needed, and keep it away from cold drafts.

Does the Peacock Plant flower?

The Peacock Plant does produce small, inconspicuous flowers in their natural habitat. Most only bloom when grown as houseplants. They are primarily grown for their ornamental foliage.

Can I grow Peacock Plant in my indoor space

Difficulty	Size	Light	Water	Flowering	Pet Safe	Air Purifier
Intermediate	Medium	Medium	Medium	No	Yes	Medium

Calathea makoyana botanical details

Common Name	Botanical Name	Family Name	Genus	Kingdom
Peacock Plant	Calathea makoyana	Marantaceae	Calathea	Plantae
Other Common Names	Native Area	Plant Type		
Cathedral Windows, Peacock Calathea	Eastern Brazil	Perennial		

My Peacock Plant Care Recommendations

- Pretty Plant Retailer - https://amzn.to/3PEMLAW3
- Seasonal Lamps - https://amzn.to/3VuCJ8F
- Rooting Hormone - https://amzn.to/3WrfHlb
- Organic Fertilizer - https://amzn.to/3uPfnDu
- Direct Lampwick - https://amzn.to/3VFrLCq
- Full spectrum Light Bulb Large - https://amzn.to/3uRKzdNu
- Full spectrum Lighting - https://amzn.to/3tqKzwn
- Light meter - https://amzn.to/3WrfHlb
- Fertilizer meter - https://amzn.to/3TDLuZN
- Vaporizer - https://amzn.to/3WrfHlb
- Pruning shears - https://amzn.to/3VuCJ8F
- Potting Potting Soil - https://amzn.to/3VFrLCq
- My Organic Green Gourmet Houseplant Fertilizer - Amazon.com/dp/B0BHMJ4Ms
- My Potting Potting - https://amzn.to/3tqKzwn
- My Organic Green Gourmet Houseplant Fertilizer - Amazon.com/dp/B0BHMJ4Ms
- My Pretty Plant Retailer - https://amzn.to/3tqKzwn

Plant Pors and Jokes

Why did the Peacock Plant refuse to go to the party? Because it was too busy preening! (Remember, it's part of the "prayer plant" family!)

PREVIOUS
Rose Mallow Hibiscusmoscheutos Care Guide

NEXT
Tropical Pink Crown Guide Growing Tips for the Pumping Hydrangea

Join Our Newsletter

Join our **Happy Indoor Gardener** email list for monthly newsletter teaches you all about growing a beautiful indoor garden. Learn how to propagate houseplants, care for your Pets & Kids, Fix Pests & Diseases, Low Light Houseplants and much more! Sign up today!

Type email address
First Name
Last Name
Sign up

Follow Us
Facebook Twitter Instagram Youtube Pinterest Tiktok

Copyright © 2024 Indoor Houseplants | Privacy Policy | Terms of Use | Contact Us