Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema) Care Guide

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Chinese Evergreen

Chinese Evergreen Introduction

Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema) is a popular and versatile houseplant known for its attractive foliage and ease of care. Native to the tropical and subtropical regions of Southeast Asia, this plant is renowned for its resilience and adaptability to various indoor conditions. Chinese Evergreen produces flowers that resemble peace lily flowers, but its main appeal lies in its colorful leaves, which come in a wide range of patterns and shades.

Aglaonema comes in a variety of cultivars, featuring leaves with different patterns and colors. The leaves can typically range from green, silver, and pink to red, with striking patterns that include spots, stripes, and blotches. The variety of colors and patterns makes Chinese Evergreen a popular choice for those who want to add a touch of color and texture to their indoor spaces. Some of the most popular cultivars include Aglaonema 'Silver Queen', 'Red Siam', and 'Pink Dalmatian', each with its unique and eye-catching leaf patterns.

Chinese Evergreen is known for its low maintenance requirements, making it an ideal choice for beginners or those looking for a low-maintenance houseplant. The plant can thrive in low light conditions and is tolerant of neglect, making it a forgiving option for busy people or those who may forget to water their plants regularly. However, it does prefer bright, indirect light and will grow more vigorously in brighter conditions.

Aglaonema is also known for its air-purifying qualities, which can help improve the quality of the air in your home. The plant is known to remove toxins from the air, such as formaldehyde and benzene, which are commonly found in cleaning products and other household chemicals. Chinese Evergreen can be a beneficial addition to your home if you are looking for a plant that can help improve your indoor air quality.

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Soil

Chinese Evergreens thrive in well-draining, rich potting soil with a pH range of 5.5 to 6.5 slightly acidic to neutral. A good mix for these plants consists of equal parts of peat moss or coco coir for moisture retention, perlite or vermiculite for aeration, and a small amount of compost or worm castings for nutrients.

The best soil mixture for Chinese Evergreens should also provide good drainage to prevent waterlogged conditions, which can lead to root rot. Avoid using heavy, compacted soil or soil that retains too much water, as this can create an unfavorable environment for the plant. To ensure the best conditions for your Chinese Evergreen, consider using a commercial potting mix specifically designed for indoor plants, or create your own mix by combining the ingredients listed above.

Regularly monitor the soil condition and repotting when necessary can help prevent these issues and maintain optimal growing conditions for your Chinese Evergreen.

Fertilizer

Chinese Evergreens benefit from regular fertilization during the growing season (spring and summer). Use a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half strength every 2-3 weeks.

Recommended fertilizer ratios:

- Nitrogen (N): 20-20-20 or 30-10-10 ratio
- Potassium (K): Ensure adequate potassium for overall health

Signs of fertilizer overuse:

- Yellowing or browning of leaf tips
- Stunted growth
- Wilting despite adequate moisture

Signs of fertilizer underuse:

- Pale or yellow leaves
- Slow growth
- Lack of new growth

Fertilizer application:

- Dilute fertilizer to half strength
- Apply every 2-3 weeks during growing season
- Reduce or stop fertilizer in fall and winter

Humidity

Chinese Evergreens prefer moderate humidity levels, ideally between 50-60%. They can tolerate average indoor humidity but will thrive in more humid conditions.

To increase humidity:

- Use a pebble tray filled with water placed beneath the pot
- Group plants together to create a microclimate
- Use a room humidifier
- Mist the leaves regularly, especially in dry environments

To decrease humidity (if needed):

- Improve air circulation with fans
- Reduce watering and avoid misting (increasing resources)

Symptoms of low humidity stress:

- Brown leaf tips and edges
- Curling leaves
- Stunted growth

Symptoms of excessive humidity:

- Fungal or bacterial issues (rare, but possible in very humid conditions)
- Slow growth due to reduced transpiration

Watering

Chinese Evergreens prefer moderate watering, allowing the top inch of soil to dry out between waterings. Overwatering is a common mistake that can lead to root rot and other issues.

Water quality considerations:

- Use filtered or dechlorinated water if possible
- If using tap water, let it sit out overnight to allow chlorine to evaporate

Signs of under-watering:

- Wilting leaves that perk up after watering
- Dry, crispy leaf edges
- Slow growth

Signs of overwatering:

- Yellowing leaves, especially lower ones
- Mushy stems or leaf petioles
- Wilting despite moist soil
- Pale water-filled leaf spots

Watering tips:

- Water thoroughly, ensuring excess drains out
- Adjust frequency seasonally: more in summer, less in winter
- Consider using self-watering pots or wick systems for consistent moisture

Lighting

Chinese Evergreens prefer bright, indirect light but can tolerate low light conditions. The ideal lighting for these plants is filtered sunlight or artificial light equivalent to 200-400 foot-candles. They can adapt to fluorescent lighting, making them excellent office plants.

Signs of insufficient light:

- Slow growth
- Elongated, weak stems
- Loss of variegation in colored varieties
- Pale leaves

Signs of excessive light:

- Leaf scorch or bleaching
- Brown, crispy leaf patches or edges
- Curling or wilting of leaves

To adapt a lighter-loving cultivar to low light:

- Place near a north-facing window
- Supplement with a full-spectrum LED grow light
- Rotate plant regularly to prevent uneven growth
- Consider moving the plant closer to a brighter location during winter months

Low light tolerant cultivars: Aglaonema 'Silver Queen', 'Red Siam', 'Pink Dalmatian'

Temperature

Chinese Evergreens thrive in a wide range of temperatures, preferring a range between 65-85°F (18-29°C). They can tolerate brief periods outside this range but prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures can be stressful.

Ideal temperatures range: 65-85°F (18-29°C)

Minimum temperature: 50°F (10°C)

Maximum temperature: 90°F (32°C)

Temperature tolerance:

- Can tolerate short periods below comfortable temperatures but prefer stable conditions
- They can withstand a mild cold snap down to 50°F (10°C)
- Avoid temperatures below 50°F (10°C) to prevent cold damage and stunted growth
- Prolonged cold exposure can lead to leaf drop and plant stress

Signs of temperature stress:

- Leaf curling or wilting in response to extreme heat or cold
- Slow growth or stunted growth during temperature extremes
- Leaf drop in response to sudden temperature changes

Temperature management tips:

- Place plants away from drafty windows and doors in winter
- Avoid placing near heat sources like radiators or vents
- Use a thermostat to maintain the stable range around plants if weather permits
- Provide shade or move plants to cooler areas during heatwaves
- Consider seasonal rotation between warmer and cooler areas
- Acclimatize plants over two weeks when moving between different temperature zones

Humidity

Chinese Evergreens prefer higher humidity levels, ideally between 50-60%. They can tolerate average indoor humidity but will thrive in more humid conditions.

To increase humidity:

- Use a pebble tray filled with water placed beneath the pot
- Group plants together to create a microclimate
- Use a room humidifier
- Mist the leaves regularly, especially in dry environments

To decrease humidity (if needed):

- Improve air circulation with fans
- Reduce watering and avoid misting (increasing resources)

Symptoms of low humidity stress:

- Brown leaf tips and edges
- Curling leaves
- Stunted growth

Symptoms of excessive humidity:

- Fungal or bacterial issues (rare, but possible in very humid conditions)
- Slow growth due to reduced transpiration

Humidity-loving cultivars:

- Aglaonema 'Pink Dalmatian'
- Aglaonema 'Red Siam'
- Aglaonema 'Silver Queen'

Humidity tolerant cultivars:

- Aglaonema 'Silver Queen'
- Aglaonema 'Red Siam'
- Aglaonema 'Pink Dalmatian'

Propagation

Chinese Evergreens can be propagated through stem cuttings or division. Stem is a relatively easy way, ideal for both cutting propagation.

1. Select healthy stem with at least 3-4 leaves
2. Cut just below a node using sterile scissors or pruning shears
3. Remove lower leaves, leaving 2-3 at the top
4. Optional: Dip the cut end in rooting hormone
5. Place cuttings in water or moist soil, ensuring at least one node is submerged
6. If using water, change it every few days to prevent bacterial growth
7. If using soil, keep it consistently moist but not waterlogged
8. Place the cutting in bright, indirect light
9. Maintain high humidity (60-70%) and warm temperatures (75-85°F) for faster rooting
10. Roots should develop in 2-4 weeks
11. Once roots are 1-2 inches long, transplant to a pot with well-draining soil

Division (for mature plants):

1. Remove the plant from its pot
2. Gently separate the root ball into sections, each with stems and roots
3. Trim any damaged roots or excessive foliage if needed
4. Pot each Aglaonema and ensure it receives bright, indirect light

Success rates:

- Stem cuttings: High success rate, easy to maintain root development
- Division: Very high success rate, but requires more care during transplanting

Best time to propagate: Spring or early summer when the plant is actively growing.

Troubleshooting tips:

- If cuttings rot before rooting, ensure they are not too waterlogged
- If new growth appears but roots don't develop, it's still worth trying to establish the plant
- Patience is key - it can take several weeks for roots to develop

Pruning

Pruning Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema)

- Remove yellow or damaged leaves at their base, using sterilized scissors or pruning shears
- Cut just above a leaf node to encourage new growth

When to prune:

- Anytime you notice damaged, yellowing, or dead leaves
- Spring is the best time for major pruning, as the plant will have the energy to recover and grow back

How Tall to Prune:

- Remove no more than one-third of the plant's total height at a time
- Consider pruning to keep the plant at a desired height or shape

Pruning tips:

- Use clean, sharp tools to prevent disease spread
- Avoid pruning too much at once, as this can stress the plant
- Dispose of pruned leaves and stems properly, as they may contain toxins

Benefits of pruning:

- Promotes bushier growth
- Maintains a desired size and shape
- Improves air circulation

Tools needed:

- Sterilized pruning shears or scissors
- Clean cloth for wiping blades between cuts

Potting

Chinese Evergreens prefer pots with good drainage to prevent waterlogging. Here's a guide for potting and repotting:

Pot size:

- Choose pots with drainage holes
- Start with a pot slightly larger than the root ball
- Repot every 2-3 years or when roots become pot-bound

Drainage needs:

- Ensure pots have holes or broken pottery at the bottom of the pot
- Use a pot saucer to catch excess water

Repotting frequency:

- Young plants: Every 1-2 years
- Mature plants: Every 2-3 years or when root-bound

Pot material considerations:

- Ceramic pots tend to stay cooler soil
- Plastic pots are lightweight and durable
- Clay pots provide good aeration

Signs that indicate repotting is needed:

- Roots growing out of drainage holes
- Water runs through the pot too quickly
- Slower growth than usual
- Stunted growth despite proper care

Repotting tips:

- Choose a pot only slightly larger than the current one
- Gently remove the plant from its current pot
- Loosen the root ball if it's tightly packed
- Place in the new pot with fresh potting mix
- Water thoroughly and place in a shaded area for a few days
- Gradually acclimatize to brighter conditions

Monitoring stress during repotting:

- Watch for signs of transplant shock and respond to care
- Adjust the care given to each Aglaonema as needed
- Ensure the compact size after repotting, avoiding over-watering

Pests and Diseases

Pests

Common issues:

- Mealybugs: White, cottony masses on leaves and stems. Remove with cotton swabs dipped in alcohol, spray with insecticide soap
- Spider mites: Tiny, red or brown mites causing yellow spots on leaves. Increase humidity, use insecticidal soap or neem oil for severe cases
- Scale insects: Small, armored pests on stems and leaves. Remove manually with a soft brush, apply horticultural oil

Prevention:

- Regular inspection of new plants before introducing to other houseplants
- Quarantine new plants for 2-4 weeks
- Maintain proper humidity levels to discourage pests

Diseases

Common issues:

- Root rot: Caused by overwatering, causes wilting and yellowing. Improve drainage and reduce watering
- Leaf spot: Brown or black spots on leaves. Remove affected leaves, improve air circulation, avoid overhead watering
- Bacterial blight: Water-soaked lesions on leaves, leaf yellowing and wilting. Remove affected parts, use copper-based fungicides

Special Features

Chinese Evergreens are known for their air-purifying qualities, ability to thrive in low light conditions, and striking variegated foliage. Some varieties features vibrant pink, red, or silver patterns on their leaves, adding visual interest to indoor spaces. These low-maintenance plants are also relatively pet-friendly compared to many other houseplants, making them a popular choice for pet-friendly homes.

Plant Benefits

Chinese Evergreens are primarily cultivated for their ornamental qualities and for purifying indoor air. Their hardiness and adaptability to various indoor conditions, coupled with their attractive foliage, make them a popular choice for interior decoration in various settings, including homes, offices, and public spaces. While these plants are not known for medicinal or culinary uses, their presence can contribute to a more pleasant and aesthetically pleasing environment, which can indirectly have some positive effects on mental well-being.

Additional Information

Chinese Evergreens are predominantly grown as indoor plants, valued for their resilience and ease of care. They are often prized as gifts for special occasions or as long-lasting houseplants. Their compact size and adaptability to different lighting conditions make them a versatile choice for various settings, including offices, homes, and even as part of larger indoor gardens or terrariums.

Life Cycle

Chinese Evergreens are perennial plants that can live for many years with proper care. Their life cycle is cultivation is primarily vegetative, focusing on leaf growth rather than flowering. The plant maintains its attractive foliage throughout its lifespan, with new leaves emerging from the stem while older leaves may eventually yellow and fall off. This slow-growing nature contributes to their long-lasting appeal, as they can maintain their compact size and ornamental value for many years without requiring frequent repotting or major pruning. Proper care, including adequate light, water, and fertilizer, can significantly extend the plant's lifespan and promote growth cycle. With proper care, including regular pruning and occasional repotting, Chinese Evergreens can maintain their attractive appearance and continue to thrive for many years.

Buy Chinese Evergreen Pennsylvania, Texas

Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema) are rare to find, and, if found, expensive and frequently out of stock. They are a popular houseplant, but they are not a common plant that is easily found in most local stores. Chinese Evergreen are more commonly found online, where they can be purchased from various sellers and delivered to your home. The availability of these plants may vary depending on your location and the season, with some sellers offering them year-round and others only carrying them seasonally. It's worth checking with local nurseries and garden centers to see if they have any Chinese Evergreen in stock, but be prepared to shop online if you can't find them locally.

Frequently Asked Questions

How often should I water my Chinese Evergreen?

Water your Chinese Evergreen when the top inch of soil feels dry. This is typically every 7-10 days, but will vary depending on light and humidity levels.

Can Chinese Evergreen grow in low light?

Yes, Chinese Evergreen are known for their adaptability to low light conditions, making them excellent indoor plants for areas with limited natural light.

Are Chinese Evergreen toxic to pets?

Yes, Chinese Evergreen are toxic to cats and dogs if ingested. They contain calcium oxalate crystals which can cause irritation and swelling in the mouth and digestive tract.

How to propagate a Chinese Evergreen?

Propagate Chinese Evergreen through stem cuttings or division. For stem cuttings, cut a 6-inch stem section just below a node or leaf and root it in water or moist soil.

Why are the leaves on my Chinese Evergreen turning yellow?

Yellow leaves can indicate overwatering, insufficient light, or natural aging of older leaves. Check the soil moisture and adjust watering accordingly, and ensure the plant is in a well-lit location.

How often should I fertilize my Chinese Evergreen?

Fertilize your Chinese Evergreen every 2-3 weeks during the growing season (spring and summer) with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half strength.

Do Chinese Evergreen need high humidity?

While Chinese Evergreen can tolerate average indoor humidity levels, they prefer higher humidity for optimal growth. Consider using a pebble tray or humidifier if your home is particularly dry.

How often should I repot my Chinese Evergreen?

Repot your Chinese Evergreen every 2-3 years or when it becomes root-bound, and choose a pot only 1-2 inches larger than the previous container.

Can Chinese Evergreen grow outdoors?

Chinese Evergreen can grow outdoors in USDA hardiness zones 10-12, but they should be protected from direct sunlight and extreme heat. Indoor cultivation is more suitable for most climates.

How do I prune my Chinese Evergreen?

Prune your Chinese Evergreen by removing yellow or damaged leaves at the base of the stem, using sterilized scissors or pruning shears.

Care Summary

Difficulty	Size	Light	Water	Humidity	Pet Safe	Pet Pollen
Easy	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	No	Medium

Aglaonema Varieties

Common Name	Botanical Name	Family Name	Genus	Kingdom
Aglaonema, Chinese Evergreen	Aglaonema	Aglaonema	Aglaonema	Plantae

Other Common Name	Native Area	Plant Type
Aglaonema, Philippine Evergreen	Tropical and subtropical regions of Southeast Asia	Perennial

Buy Chinese Evergreen Online

Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema) Plant

- Pickly Plant Nursery https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Amazon https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Bigleaf Nursery https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Exotic Angle https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Etsy https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Chinese Evergreen https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Aglaonema https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Planting Nature https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Pickly Plant https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Ivy Plants Green Diamond Houseplant https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Yard Plants https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Ivy Plants Green Diamond Houseplant https://amzn.to/3Ffqu3W
- Etsy

Plant Facts and Links

Why did the Chinese Evergreen refuse to move? Because it was firmly rooted in its roots!

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