

## Tillandsias (Air Plants)

Tillandsias (aka Air Plants) are technically epiphytes, meaning that they grow in nature on another tree, host, or object but are not parasitic. They do not require soil to grow, since water and nutrients are absorbed through tiny vessels located throughout their leaves called trichomes.



The original plant will mature, bloom, then form little 'pups' around the base of the plants. These pups will mature, bloom and start the cycle again! You can remove the pups when they reach the size of the mother plant.

**Uses:** Tillandsias can be mounted on any solid substrate that does not absorb water. Display in glass containers or on shells, driftwood or rocks. Avoid gluing them to a surface. Roots can be trimmed if necessary.

**Light and Temperature:** Requires bright indirect light (full spectrum fluorescent light ok), warm temperatures, humidity and good air circulation (no moss). No direct sun.

**Water:** Watering frequency depends on the room temperature and humidity. The higher the temperature, the more humidity is required. In general, mist or rinse once a week, gently shaking off the excess water. Let the base dry a bit before returning to its container. Tall thin tillandsia varieties need an extra misting on their tips. Rain water and spring water are ideal, but do not use distilled water.

Symptoms of under-watering are usually inward-curving leaves or leaf-tip dieback. If leaves begin the curl, soak for a couple of hours to rehydrate, then gently shake off excess water. When over-watered, the plant will rot and fall apart, so do not leave plants soaking while you're away on vacation!

**Air:** Of course air plants need air! Good circulation is important, so do not place in an enclosed container, especially after watering. BTW, air vents are not good.

**Fertilizer:** Air Plants can be sensitive to fertilizers so make sure not to over do it! Use a water-soluble fertilizer once or twice a month at 1/4 strength. During winter months when growth slows, cut back on watering and fertilizing.