

# Christmas Cactus

## Christmas Cactus Care

Christmas and Thanksgiving Cactus are natives of the tropical forests. Most live in the crotches of trees, where they receive partial shade and frequent moisture.

### Care

In the home, Christmas Cactus prefer bright indirect light. The soil should be allowed to dry almost completely before watering thoroughly. Fertilize regularly in spring and summer with a cactus fertilizer. The plants enjoy light shade outside for the summer. A good soil mix to use is a soilless peat moss to which 25% cactus soil is added.

### Flowering

To ensure flowering, decrease watering frequency in August, allowing the soil to dry completely between waterings. Naturally shorter day lengths and cooler temperatures in September and October will help flower buds to set. Temperatures of 50-55 degrees Fahrenheit at night and 60-65 degrees Fahrenheit during the day are ideal for flower bud setting. Temperatures above 68 degrees Fahrenheit result in sporadic flowering. Temperatures of 50 degrees Fahrenheit or cooler will prevent flowering. If night temperatures remain above 60 degree Fahrenheit , the plant will need 13 hours of complete darkness at night during September and October in order to set flower buds.

Once flowering buds begin to show, gradually increase watering frequency until you are again watering when the soil is almost dry.

After flowering, repeat the drier conditions for two months to allow the plant to rest.

Flower buds will drop if the plant receive too little or too much water, if located in a drafty place, or if drastic light or temperature changes are made.



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