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## **Moving Plants Indoor**

Chilly nights are the signal that we need to move the container plants we treasure indoors. Whether you are a novice at this fall task or a beginner, remember some important considerations before moving.

Do you have room indoors for the size of container you will be moving? If your plant will continue actively growing through the winter then you will need a warm area with plenty of light, perhaps near a window. Try to avoid placing plants over heating sources such as electric heaters or vents as this will dry out the soil and the plant. If your plant will be dormant or near dormant for the winter then you can find a dark closet to put it in once you have trimmed it back. These containers will still require some water during winter.

Before bringing your plant indoors you will want to prune back your plant. This helps to acclimatize it to the indoor, helps reduce stress from the change in environment and will also help you to clean and inspect the plant. Pruning will vary depending on the type of plant and should be done based on the plants needs.

Once you have pruned the plant check the roots and soil to see if the plant needs repotting. If the roots are compacted inside the container then you will either need to move to a larger pot or prune the root ball down by half. While you are inspecting and caring for the roots, inspect and clean the pot. Check for eggs, worms, hidden snakes and spiders and clean any film from the surface of the pot or soil. Make sure you check the very bottom of the pot as well.

Finally, check the plant for pests. The most common pest that will hitch a ride on plants that are moved from the out of doors are aphids. These soft bodied pests are very small and sometimes go unnoticed until the colony is so large that the plant is covered with them. Whiteflies and mites are also pests to watch out for. All three will leave a sticky residue on plant leaves that can easily be seen by the sheen that is on the leaf. If you see this then there is a pest issue that should not be brought into the house.

Techniques for removing pests include hosing down with a strong spray of water, spraying down with soapy water, use of a horticultural oil to cover the insect. You can also move the plant to an outdoor area that is protected from the cold and thoroughly spray with insecticides to kill pests. Each of these techniques will have to be done multiple times and may work better if you use more than one technique together.

Once you have completed these tasks and have no pests on your plant, you can move it indoors to provide care through winter.

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