



BOTANICAL BAZAR

TIPS ON RAISING YOUR MONSTERA

FROM ARRIVAL TO KEEPING IT HAPPY

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR VARIEGATED MONSTERA

PLANTS ARE LIKE BABIES

BOTANICAL BAZAR GUIDE TO MONSTERA



VARIEGATED CARE, TIPS & TRICKS

WHAT IS VARIEGATED MONSTERA?

A gorgeous plant that's native to southern Mexico and Panama, *Monstera deliciosa* is an easy to care for plant known most commonly as the “Swiss cheese plant.” The name comes from its development of ridges and holes on its mature leaves.

The Variegated *Monstera* requires similar care to the great green *Monstera deliciosa*. The main difference between both is the white variegation, which cannot absorb light. This means the plant needs to work twice as hard to photosynthesize.

Therefore, you should keep your variegated *Monstera* in bright ambient light to make it happy (*without direct sunlight*).

*Monstera*s love a warm, humid environment, a decent amount of water and indirect sunshine.

Keep your *Monstera* away from vents and drafts where it would be exposed to dry air. Make sure it's somewhere where it can receive medium to bright indirect light.

Note that because of the deficiency of chlorophyll, variegated *Monstera* is not as persistent as a non-variegated *Monstera*.

It is quite fragile and often dies quickly when found in nature due to the insufficient amount of chlorophyll for the proper growth and life.

On the bright side, with some guidelines that we are going to share, caring for your precious Variegated *Monstera* should be a piece of cake! Let's take it one step at a time!



TABLE OF CONTENT

06 LIGHT AND TEMPERATURE REQUIREMENTS

Of the stunning variegated Monstera plant

07 RECOMMENDED SOIL

The soil matters

07 POTTING AND REPOTTING

How to pot and repot your Variegated Monstera plant

08 CHOOSING THE POT

Choose the right home for your plant



TABLE OF CONTENT

11 WATERING VARIEGATED MONSTERA PLANT

Lightly moist, and do not overwater

12 FERTILIZING

Choose the soil that can provide all the required nutrients

13 SUPPORTING YOUR PLANT

Monstera are climbers

13 HOW TO PROPAGATE VARIEGATED MONSTERA

1. Propagation from Seeds
2. Propagation from Stem Cuttings
 - a. Propagating in Water
 - b) Propagating in Soil
 - c) Propagating in Moss



TABLE OF CONTENT

17 COMMON PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

- 1.The edges of my Variegated Monstera are turning brown
- 2.My monstera leafs are turning yellow!
- 3.Infection & Pests

19 F.A.Q.S

- 1.Is it OK to put my Variegated Monstera close to the airconditioning?
- 2.Does the Monstera Variegated flower?

LIGHT AND TEMPERATURE REQUIREMENTS

Of the Variegated Monstera Plant

Have you ever had a chance to raise a regular Monstera? If so, then you have most of the knowledge you need to raise a variegated one, though there are some distinct differences. One definite similarity, however, is that they both need the same level of attention and care.

The main difference that needs to be taken into deep consideration is that since the white part of the variegated plant cannot absorb the required amount of sunlight, it needs to work harder than its regular a fully green plant would.



Sunshine

This is why you certainly cannot keep your variegated plant at corners with low levels of sunlight. For optimum growth and absorption, keep it in bright ambient light at all times.

What's more, Variegated Monsteras require and work best in environments with **sufficient humidity and water**, as well as **indirect sunlight**.

Note that the variegated monstera does not tolerate direct exposure to sunlight.

Though it does need a lot of sun, under no circumstances should it ever be exposed to direct sunlight as this could put the plant at risk of getting burnt, literally (yikes!).

Temperate

The optimum temperature for your Variegated Monstera is between 65-80°F (or 18-27°C). Any temperature below 50°F (10°C) is harmful to your plant. Don't get me started on the devastating effects of the Monstera being in low temperatures for long periods of time. Adapt accordingly and do what it takes to keep it at an optimum environment, this includes the space requirement for your Monstera.

Pro Tip: Move your plant as far away as possible from any sources of dry air, such as drafts and vents.

RECOMMENDED SOIL

Of the Variegated Monstera Plant

Monstera plants like moist soil that's high in nutrients. A good mix usually consists of 3 parts potting soil, 2 part perlite, pumice or coarse horticultural sand.

Another mix could be 2 parts of coco fiber or peat moss, 1 part small orchid bark, and 2 parts perlite. If you have a habit of overwatering your plants, add extra perlite to your mix.



POTTING & REPOTTING

You should pot the plant immediately upon receiving it, since you have received it bare-rooted and wrapped in Sphagnum Moss. After 18 to 24 months, you should repot the plant due to the growth and general exhaustion of the nutrients from the soil.

Repotting is a very important factor for the health and care of the variegated monstera.



Choosing the container

The exterior doesn't really have an effect on the health of the plant, so choose whatever design fits your home's vibe!

Keep in mind though, that in this case, size matters.

It is of crucial importance that you follow these instructions:

Each time you decide to repot your variegated monstera, ensure that you use a pot with a larger diameter than the one you used up until that point. Ideally, the new pot needs to be 25-50 mm wider, and ideally deeper than the old one.

Use a regular pot with drainage holes at the bottom. Choose one that comes with a tray that collects the excessive water. This is come in handy when you water your plant because any extra water will sink out, leaving less chance of growing your plant friend.

Do not use pots without drainage holes. But really, if you do, you need to be way extra cautious, because you might drown your plant. Avoid pouring too much water as the water will lay dormant near the plants' root, one of the main causes of root rot!

Now, who wants that?



REPOTTING VARIEGATED MONSTERA – ACTUAL STEPS

Once you've made your choice, here is how to practically repot the variegated monstera

Preparation:

- Wear protective gloves on your hands to keep them clear. Soil can cause a brownish effect on your nails, so if you enjoy clean nails, wear gloves. It's that simple.
- If you don't like having dirt or soil in your home, use a mat, cloth, or even a plastic layer to make the post potting cleaning process easier.

Let's begin, here are the Steps:

1. Crush soil with your hands, then pour it into the new container/pot. Make sure the soil is mixed well. Remember, this is going to be your plant friend's new home, and we all like a nice home.
2. To unroot the plant, try squeezing the old pot to help release the potted plant without harming it.
3. Don't worry about leaving your plant outside of soil. It should take you approximately 10 minutes to set up the new pot for rooting, and your cute monster will definitely survive this, so relax!
4. Mix the soil (check pt. 1) and pour it into the pot. Make sure that the plant is not too shallow nor too deep within the soil.



REPOTTING VARIEGATED MONSTERA - ACTUAL STEPS

5. Remove air pockets by shaking the pot.
6. Hold the plant at the center of the pot, meanwhile, add soil to the plant until it fully covers the roots and the plant no longer moves when you don't hold it. The plant needs to be stable enough to be able to hold itself without your assistance.
7. You may need to shake the pot from time to time to make sure there are no air pockets.
8. Tap the top of the soil to make it flat.
9. Place the plant where you want, but keep in mind its requirements for a healthy and happy life.
10. Clean up the mess.

You're good to go!



Lucky for you, Monsteras don't need a huge amount of water to be happy. They prefer soil that is consistently lightly moist. They are sensitive to overwatering, and don't like being in soggy soil. In fact, overwatering your precious can lead to root rot. Obviously being a parent is the hardest job in the world, and owning a plant isn't far off from having a puppy around. What I mean by this is, you will need to observe it at all times and see if it needs water. Most importantly, avoid overwatering. Just because the soil is dry, doesn't always mean it is time to water it. To see whether it's time for watering, drip your finger into the soil about 2 inches deep. If this part of the soil is dry, it's time to water!

If it's still moist, leave it for another one or two days, depending on how moist the soil is. Monsteras love soil that is lightly humid at all times. Simply put, most professionals recommend watering your Variegated Monstera once a week, ideally in the morning.

Pro tip: Rotate your variegated monstera from time to time so it
can grow equally. Occasionally dust its leaves to enable proper
photosynthesis.

FERTILIZING VARIEGATED MONSTERA

Plants need to eat too, and their food comes from the soil.

This means that after some time, around 18 to 24 months to be specific, you will need to change the soil in order to give the plant access to fresh nutrients. You should also occasionally include fertilizers in the mix.

Just be sure to not overfeed the plant with fertilizers. Try fertilizing it no more than once a month.



Go for an organic liquid fertilizer, as these are easier to manage how much you add to the soil mix. More importantly, be selective with the fertilizer! The best ones are the ones made specifically for house plants. If you can get one specifically for Monsteras, even better! I know it's sometimes time-consuming to read the application instructions, especially if you are working full time. But trust me, for the sake of your plant, read the application method before you pour. Adding more fertilizer than needed can be physically devastating for your Monstera.

It can lead to burning the plant or roots, and even accumulate salt in the root areas. With salt in those areas, it will be difficult for your plant to absorb water. No water leads to dehydration, and dehydration leads to death, like any human! Anyways, when you've decided on the fertilizer, use it only during the spring to summer, no more than once per month. Fertilization through autumn and winter is unnecessary because the plant is in hydration mode during those seasons.

SUPPORTING YOUR PLANT

Monstera are climbers, and they enjoy climbing wires, walls, trellis, and anything you put near it really. To give it some extra support, why don't you try tying it to a moss pole, a plant totem, or a piece of wood. Just know that as it gets older, it grasps on pretty firmly, so trying to remove it from the object might hurt the plant. Yes, plants get attached too.

Take this into consideration if you decide to find a permanent thing to hang onto!



HOW TO PROPAGATE VARIEGATED MONSTERA

You've fallen in deep love with your Variegated Monstera. Perhaps you wish to have some more babies, don't worry they're not as expensive as having human babies, or share them with your friends and family. To do this, you can propagate the beautiful plant!

For your information, being a variegated plant is actually a mutation and is relatively rare. There's an approximate chance of only 1:100.000 that the new plant will be variegated.

This means that the best way to get another variegated plant is by the reproduction of the existing plant. Typically, you can propagate a plant by planting new seeds, which lowers your chances, or by planting one of its stems. As a dummy, "what?! How do you plant its stem?"



CONTINUED: PROPAGATION

1. Propagation from Seeds

Also known as the more method more likely to fail in creating a variegated plant. In more scientific terms, the variegation occurs from a lack of chlorophyll on the leaf. So, planting from seeds does not 100% mean that the plant will grow to become variegated. On the other hand, sometimes the mutation in the cells can be genetic and only in this case the reproduction from seeds can guarantee the variegation.

2. Propagation from Stem Cuttings

This is the most guaranteed method to preserve the variegation. It is also more dummy-proof. Still, this method is not to be taken lightly, and you should be very careful about which cuttings you make.

Examine your plant carefully and then choose a healthy-looking stem that includes nodes, or at least one. Only the stems with nodes will be able to grow into a full plant.

Like amputating a human leg, you need to sterilize the cutting equipment, be it scissors or a knife. This is so that your plant does not get contaminated with pesticides or plant diseases/bacteria. Make the cut below the node and always take care that there are two or three leaves on the cutting you want to separate. The more leaves, the better because they'll be able to photosynthesize, and therefore, speeding up the growth of the new plant.

Now that you made the cut, you need to decide on the type of *media* that you will keep your cutting in before it's time to officially repot. If you're a dummy like we first were, you'll know it's time to repot when it starts growing roots.

*Pro tip: Keep your cuttings in **water, soil, or sphagnum moss.***



A) Propagating in water

Also known as the method for the ultimate propagation dummies. Simply put, leave the cuttings in a water container and wait for it to grow roots. *Trick: Use a transparent container so can consistently check on the plant's situation.*

Before you panic, know that the water roots may be paler than the roots developed in soil. It can also be a different colour other than paler. Once the plant is ready for potting, the cutting will need time to adapt to the soil.

B) Propagating in Soil

This method is technically better for the cutting than water, but not the easiest method.

Simple pour soil into a pot, water the soil until it's moist (not soggy). Follow this by making a small hole and then put the cutting inside.

Cover the cutting area with soil, and leave it there for a few weeks. Make sure the node is in the soil, and water the plant only when the soil feels dry.

Remember the 2-inch rule!

You won't be able to see the roots in this case, so you'll know that it's working when you start seeing new leaves growing,

I know it's tempting to keep bringing the cutting out of the soil, but don't. To check if it's working, try pulling the leaf upward. If there's any resistance, it's working!



CONTINUED: PROPAGATION

C) Propagating in Moss

This is the best way to propagate according to many, and it's the method we use. We use this method because Sphagnum moss is known to have healing benefits, antibacterial properties, and boosts root growth.

This means there's a higher chance of your cutting turning into a fully grown plant!

Here are the steps:

- Place the moss in a container. You can also use dry sphagnum moss.
- Pour some water in the moss, or you can also soak it in water (preferred for the dried one) and place the cutting inside. Ensure that the moss is not too wet. Be extra cautious with that, because remember, soggy Monstera means rotten roots.

Now that you know how to propagate a beautiful variegated Monstera, go ahead and make some more plant babies!

MONSTERA VARIEGATA PESTS, PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Common problems when growing variegated monstera

The edges of my Variegated Monstera are turning brown

There are multiple reasons why this could be happening. For example, due to too little light or salt build up in the water.

Due to its lack of chlorophyll in some areas, the plant will need to be in an area with a lot of indirect sunlight. In addition, this variety is sensitive to salt buildup, so it's best to let your tap water sit for 24 hours before you water the plant. The plant could also be affected by salt built up. Try leaving the water out for 24 hours before you water the plant. Many of the minerals and chemicals will evaporate and stop brown tips from occurring.

TIP: If the tips of your Monstera get brown, you don't need to cut the whole leaf off. Trim off the brown parts only.



The edges of my Variegated Monstera are turning brown

There are various reasons why your plant may be turning yellow. Follow the process of elimination to figure out why it's turning yellow.

1. Ensure that your Monstera is receiving the proper water and light. Yellowing can often be the first sign of overwatering.
2. If it's still yellow, it could be because your plant needs to be repotted in a bigger pot. You can tell if it is rootbound when the non-aerial roots become exposed above the topsoil and seem to be swirling around the pot. Most Monsteras need to be repotted approximately every 18 to 24 months.

CONTINUED: MONSTERA VARIEGATA PESTS, PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Common problems encountered when growing variegated monstera

Infection & Pests

Infections can be caused by bugs and fungus gnats. More specifically bugs such as scale, (little brown disks on the stem or leaves), aphids, spider mites (tiny "dots" under the leaves), mealybugs, and fungus gnats.

The most common causes of infection for variegated monstera are mites and scale.

They are easy to spot and the main purpose in life is to suck all the sap from the underneath of leaves, destroying the plant. The second cause of infection is scale insects, which are more easily seen when they mature. Their purpose is also to suck the life out of your plant. Resolve the issue with an alcohol solution or diluted soap. Otherwise, you can also use a bug spray and get it over with!



F.A.Q.S

Is it OK to put my Variegated Monstera close to the airconditioning?

Variegated Monsteras are tropical plants that appreciate a humid environment. If conditions are too dry, their leaves will begin to droop. Monsteras can thrive in an air-conditioned apartment, but avoid putting them in direct contact with the line of air or heating units. If you notice the plant swaying with the ac or heater, it's a sign that the plant needs to be moved elsewhere.

Does the Monstera Variegated flower?

It's rare, but Yes, it does! If it's flowering, it means you have been a great plant friend and parent and you should be proud!

Keep up the good work!



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