



You Can Be a Bonsaiist

A bonsai is much more than just a 'Potted Tree.' It must be trained and changed into a refined living sculpture. Bonsai is a visual art form that should evoke an aesthetic response by the viewer.

BASIC PROCEDURE FOR THE CARE OF YOUR BONSAI

Make sure you keep your bonsai outdoors unless it is an indoor variety. Many plants will not survive indoors. They need to be given a dormant period.

Fertilizing

Use a well balanced, water soluble fertilizer. Apply at half strength every two weeks during the growing season. One of our favorites is **Dr. Earth Liquid Fertilizer** or a time release fertilizer (such as **Osmocote**) works well too. CAUTION: DO NOT OVER FERTILIZE!

Light

Avoid direct sunlight. Shade cloth or a lath house will give you a proper growing environment.

Pruning

A third to half of the new growth should be cut, pinched or pruned to the desired shape. Timing of pruning is important to develop a desired shape. Root pruning is done at the time of repotting.

Repotting

The "Rule of Thumb" is that broadleaf plants should be repotted every three years, while conifers and needle-leaved plants should be repotted every five years. January to early March is the time to repot your bonsai.

Temperature

Do not let your bonsai freeze hard. Do not keep and outdoor bonsai in the house for more than 2 days. They do best at 65°F to 80°F. During dormancy they will do best at 30°F to 50°F. Keep the soil moist but not wet while they are dormant. 60 to 90 days at these temperatures in the fall will be fine for a dormant period.

Moisture

Do not drown your bonsai!!! Keep your bonsai moist but not wet. Some bonsai do better when they are on the dry side. When watering your bonsai, water the foliage as well as the plant.

It is best not to use a garden hose. Use a sprinkler can or a misting nozzle. Water well—you want to drain well through the drainage holes in your pot. This procedure allows air into the root zone and also allows excess salts to flush out.

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