

Tips for Moving Plants



Moving House Plants

Note: Because of Hawaii's unique and fragile ecosystem, the State of Hawaii has very restrictive laws governing moving plants to Hawaii. As a general rule, don't bring plants into Hawaii. If you're moving out of Hawaii, moving your plants is also not recommended because they will not survive the long ocean travel. The tips provided here are useful when moving plants within Hawaii, or within the continental US.

Preparing Your Plants

Like any living thing, plants require special attention. If you're moving long-distance, you'll want to move plants in a temperature-controlled environment such as your car. Extreme temperatures and lack of fresh air in a moving van can be fatal to your plants.

Here are some tips for making sure your plants survive the trip to their new home:

3 Weeks Before Moving Day

Repot any plants in clay pots into unbreakable, plastic containers. The new pot should be big enough to hold the plant, without being too big. Jumping pot sizes can cause plants to respond poorly.

2 Weeks Before Moving Day

Prune larger plants. Pruning will make packing easier and produce healthy, bushy, compact, attractive houseplants. You can prune by simply pinching back newer growth with your thumb and forefinger. Succulents (e.g., cacti, jade plants) and ferns do not respond well to pruning.

1 Week Before Moving

Eliminate any insects or plant parasites. Pesticides may contain harmful chemicals so use them with care and always follow label directions.

Another way to kill pests is to put the entire plant in a black, plastic utility bag for about six hours with a bug/pest strip or an animal flea collar. Keep the bag in a cool, shady area. This method is environmentally safer for your home and your plant.

2 Days Before Moving

Make sure your plants are getting their normal dose of water. Keep in mind that during the winter months, roots saturated with moisture may freeze. In warmer weather, overwatered plants are subject to damaging fungus growth during transit.

Moving Day

Pack your plants in the morning, or the night before. Conventional packing cartons are good for moving plants. A dishpack, available from Pacific Transfer, has compartments that easily adapt to holding plants.



Tips for Moving Plants (continued)



Securely anchor each plant to prevent slipping when the box is lifted or jostled during transit. To do this, place the pot in a box, making sure it fits snugly in the bottom. Use paper around the base of the pot to hold it in place. Next, cushion branches and leaves of the plant with soft paper. Moistened paper can be used for short periods; however, plants allowed to remain wet are more susceptible to disease.

Finally, punch air holds in the sides of the box and loosely fasten the lid. Set the boxes upright and clearly mark the lids to avoid putting them into the van with the furniture and your other belongings. If you follow this procedure, your plants will be ready to travel safely for up to four days.

Rules & Regulations Regarding Plants Many states regulate the transportation of certain

plants. Some states even require a “Gypsy Moth Inspection Certificate.” Traditionally, California, Arizona, and Florida have the most rigid restrictions. Check with your State Department of Agriculture or Department of Natural Resources to find out the rules and regulations of your destination state.

If you find out that you cannot take your plants along, consider taking cuttings instead. Place them in a sterile mix, or in a plastic bag with damp cotton or paper towel. The cuttings should survive several days’ travel and be ready to take root in your new home.

Plant Care Guide We couldn’t possibly give green thumb troubleshooting tips on all varieties and species of plants, but here’s some proper care information on some of the more popular ones.

Plant	Common Problems	Cause/Solution
<i>Philodendron</i>	Leaves droop	Too hot & dry/soak thoroughly, move to a cooler spot.
	Leaves turn yellow	Too wet/check drainage holes, let dry between waterings.
<i>Ficus</i>	Leaf drop	Too wet/allow soil to dry before watering. Too cold/move to brighter, warmer place.
	Brown leaves	Hot, dry air/use cool mist humidifier.
<i>Boston fern</i>	Lanky leaves	Too dark/move to brighter spot.
	Spindly fronds	Pot is too big/let it get root bound.
	Brown fronds	Dry air/use cool mist humidifier, or place a wet sponge among the fronds.
<i>African Violet</i>	Spots on leaves	Water on leaves/just remove spotted leaves, avoid getting water on leaves.
	No flowers	Too dark/increase light intensity



Tips for Moving Plants (continued)



<i>Aloe-vera</i>	Leaves topple over	Too root bound/repot, or divide plant.
	Leave wither	Too dry/water a little more often
<i>Dracena</i>	Leaves droop	Direct sun/move to more filtered light.
<i>Parlor Palm</i>	Brown leaf tips	Dry air and soil/mist & increase water.
<i>Schefflera</i>	Blackened leaf tips	Soggy soil/reduce water.
	Leaf Drop	Cool air/move away from drafts.
<i>Spider Plant</i>	Brown scorch marks on leaves	Leaf shine damage/clean with pure water.
	Rotting in center	Too wet/allow to dry before watering.
	Brown leaf tips	Too hot & dry/move away from direct sun, water more often.

