# 10 Perfect Plants to Gift to Green Thumb Novices

Gifting plants to someone just beginning their journey into gardening can be a thoughtful way to encourage their newfound interest. However, the key is choosing plants that are not only beautiful but also resilient and easy to care for. Here, we'll explore ten perfect plant gifts that are ideal for green thumb novices, ensuring they have a positive and encouraging start to their gardening endeavors.

## 1. Snake Plant (Sansevieria)

When it comes to plant gifts, the Snake Plant, with its striking, upright leaves and resilient nature, is a fantastic choice for beginners. It thrives on neglect, requiring minimal water and surviving well in low-light conditions, making it perfect for those who might not yet have a routine for plant care. Its air-purifying qualities also add a healthy bonus, improving indoor air quality by removing toxins.

## 2. Spider Plant (Chlorophytum comosum)

Spider Plants are known for their adaptability and ease of care, making them an excellent gift for novices. They can grow in a variety of lighting conditions and require only moderate watering. Their ability to produce numerous “pups” offers a rewarding experience for a beginner, as they can witness the growth and propagation of their plant first-hand.

## 3. Pothos (Epipremnum aureum)

Pothos – appreciated for its standout heart-shaped leaves and intriguing, trailing vines – is not only visually appealing but also incredibly forgiving. It can thrive in low light and needs only occasional watering, making it hard to kill. Its rapid growth gives a rewarding sense of achievement, perfect for boosting the confidence of a novice gardener.

## 4. Peace Lily (Spathiphyllum)

The Peace Lily is a beautiful, low-maintenance plant that blooms stunning white flowers, bringing elegance to any space. It’s tolerant of low light, and its watering needs are simple – it visibly droops when thirsty, taking the guesswork out of watering. This responsiveness makes it an interactive plant for a beginner.

## 5. ZZ Plant (Zamioculcas zamiifolia)

The ZZ Plant is known for its drought tolerance and ability to survive in low-light conditions, making it nearly indestructible. Its glossy, oval-shaped leaves add a touch of sophistication to any room. It’s one of the ideal plant gifts for beginners who might not have a consistent watering schedule yet.

## 6. Aloe Vera (Aloe barbadensis miller)

Aloe Vera is not just simple to care for but also offers practical benefits. It requires minimal watering and thrives in indirect light as long as it’s suitably bright. The gel from aloe vera leaves can be used to soothe minor burns and skin irritations, making it a plant that’s both decorative and useful for novice gardeners.

## 7. Jade Plant (Crassula ovata)

The Jade Plant is a succulent that’s ideal for those new to plant care, thanks to its low water requirements and preference for bright light. Its thick, glossy leaves store water, allowing it to withstand periods of neglect. The Jade Plant can also live for many years, growing alongside its caretaker.

## 8. Rubber Plant (Ficus elastica)

The Rubber Plant is a robust plant that can add a touch of the tropics to any interior. It has large, attractive leaves and is relatively easy to care for, needing only moderate light and occasional watering. Its ability to grow tall makes it an excellent statement plant for beginners looking to make an impact.

## 9. English Ivy (Hedera helix)

English Ivy is a versatile plant that can thrive indoors with moderate exposure to sunlight and regular watering. Its trailing vines can add a beautiful, cascading element to shelves or hanging baskets, providing instant gratification to a novice gardener. It’s also known for its air-purifying properties, making it a healthy addition to the home.

## 10. Boston Fern (Nephrolepis exaltata)

The Boston Fern is a lush, evergreen plant that adds a vibrant touch of greenery to any space. It prefers humid conditions and indirect light, making it perfect for a bathroom or kitchen. Regular misting and watering will keep it thriving, introducing novices to a simple plant care routine.

## Why These Are the Perfect Plant Gifts for Green Thumb Novices

Gifting plants to someone new to gardening is a fantastic way to support their interest in a healthy, nurturing hobby. By choosing plants that are forgiving and easy to care for, you help ensure their experience is positive and fulfilling. Each of these ten plant gifts offers something unique, from air purification to medicinal benefits, making them perfect for green thumb novices eager to embark on their gardening journey.

---

# 6 Inexpensive Grow Lights for Indoor Plants

Growing plants indoors is great. However, when plants are grown indoors, they often do not receive enough natural sunlight to meet their needs. This is where grow lights come

in. Of course, you can choose to spend a lot of money on grow lights. However, you don’t have to do that. There are some great options for inexpensive grow lights for indoors plants.

# What Are Grow Lights?

Grow lights are special lights designed just for plants. They emit a range of light wavelengths, including red and blue light which are important for photosynthesis. Grow lights can be used as the only source of light for indoor plants. However, most of us have at least some natural light in our homes, especially during the warmer months of the year. Therefore, most of us are seeking inexpensive grow lights for indoor plants that supplement that existing natural light.

# Types of Grow Lights

Before we get into the most inexpensive grow lights for indoor plants, let’s look at the different types of grow lights along with their relative costs. The first three on this list are the most common options and the latter three are alternatives that some people prefer.

## Fluorescent Grow Lights

Fluorescent lights are a popular choice for indoor growers due to their affordability and energy efficiency. They come in two main types: T5 and T8. T5s are more efficient and produce more light per watt than T8s. Fluorescent lights emit mostly blue light, which is good for vegetative growth. However, they don’t emit as much red light, which is needed for flowering. Fluorescent lights are generally the most inexpensive grow lights for indoor plants. They typically cost anywhere from $20 to $200.

## LED Grow Lights

LED grow lights are becoming increasingly popular among indoor growers due to their energy efficiency and versatility. They emit both blue and red light, which is important for both vegetative growth and flowering. LED lights also produce less heat than other types of grow lights, which can be beneficial for certain plants. The cost of LED grow lights varies widely, but they tend to be more expensive than fluorescent lights, ranging from $50 to $1000 or more. Still, there are some good inexpensive grow lights for indoor plants in this category. In fact, they are a preferred choice over fluorescents for most people.

## High-Intensity Discharge (HID) Grow Lights

HID lights are the most powerful grow lights available and are commonly used by commercial growers. They come in two types – one better for flowering and one better for vegetation. HID lights can cost anywhere from $100 to $1000 or more. Moreover, they tend to cost a lot to operate, so your utility bill will go up when using them. These aren't your best choice.

### Ceramic Metal Halide (CMH) Grow Lights

CMH grow lights are a relatively new type of HID light that uses ceramic arc tubes instead of quartz. CMH lights are also cooler and more durable than other types of HID lights. However, they can be more expensive than other types of grow lights.

### Plasma Grow Lights

Plasma grow lights are another type of HID light that uses plasma technology to produce a full spectrum of light. They are highly efficient, producing more light per watt than other types of grow lights, and have a long lifespan. However,

plasma grow lights are among your most expensive option.

## Induction Grow Lights

Induction grow lights use a high-frequency magnetic field to generate light. Therefore, they are highly efficient and long-lasting. They emit a full spectrum of light and are a good option for indoor growers looking for a low-maintenance and energy-efficient grow light. However, induction grow lights are also among the most expensive options.

# 6 Inexpensive Grow Lights for Indoor Plants

With all of that in mind, the most inexpensive grow lights for indoor plants will be fluorescents and some LED options. That said, arguably the LED lights are the better choice for most gardeners. Here are some good choices:

## 1. LORDEM Plant Grow Light

This is a 72 LED Full Spectrum Grow Light. Therefore, it's good for most plant types. It's highly adjustable in terms of plant height and has a long cord to make it easy to set up indoors. Amazon sells this for about $20.

## 2. Yadoker Plant Grow Light

This one is almost identical to the previous suggestion including the price point.

## 3. GooingTop LED Grow Light

This one is designed with a clip so that you can clip it onto a table and adjust the light accordingly over tabletop indoor plants. According to Amazon, it is "equipped with 10 Red + 74 White LEDs, this growing Lamp is similar to the full-spectrum

sunlight at noon." Moreover, it comes with a one year warranty. It sells for about $35.

## 4. Aokrean Grow Lights for Indoor Plants

This is a cute little stand on which you set your flower pot. The light can be adjusted up to 26″ to accommodate different pot sizes. It's a stylish option that looks kind of similar to the Ring Light for humans. They are sold individually but you get a much better deal if you get a two pack. Pay abut $25 for two.

## 5. Mosthink LED Plant Grow Light Strips

Most of the inexpensive grow lights for indoor plants are little lamps like the ones above. However, you can also get glow light strips. These can be a great way to give the proper light to multiple plants in one area of the home. This one is 13″ long and you get a two pack for under $20. However, you can also find ones that are longer if you need to cover more area for your plants.

## 6. DOMMIA Grow Lights for Indoor Plants

In terms of aesthetics, I really like this option. It's a panel that looks a bit like a sunburst or stars. You can place the panel like a shelf on a multiple-shelf plant stand, illuminating the plants below it on that particular shelf. An entire set of these looks really striking. And, of course, it gives your plants the light that they need to thrive. This costs about $20 per panel.

## Read More:

- Edible Plants You Can Grow Inside
- Cheap and Effective Liquid Nutrients For Your Indoor Plants
- 5 Quick Tips to Rescue Your Plants from Root Rot

# Cheap and Effective Liquid Nutrients for Your Indoor Plants

If you're a plant enthusiast, then you know that your indoor plants require a balance of light, water, and nutrients to thrive. While water and sunlight are easy to provide, it can be challenging to find the right liquid nutrients for indoor plants without breaking the bank. Fortunately, there are plenty of cheap and effective liquid nutrient options that you can make at home. Here are some of the most popular options:

# Compost Tea as Liquid Nutrients for Indoor Plants

Compost tea is one of the most popular DIY liquid fertilizers for indoor plants. This isn't tea, per se. Instead, it's a means of creating a tea-like liquid of steeped compost.

To make compost tea, you'll need to gather some compost and a container to brew the tea. Fill the container with water and add the compost. Use a ratio of one part compost to four parts water. Stir the mixture well. Then, cover the container to keep out pests. Let the "tea" brew for several days, stirring occasionally. After several days, strain the liquid through a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth to remove any solid particles.

Once you've made your compost tea, you can use it to water your indoor plants. Be sure to dilute the tea with water before using it, as it can be quite potent. Once again, use a ratio of one part compost tea to four parts water. So, yes, add water again. Then use the diluted "tea" as liquid nutrients for your indoor plants. Most plants want this added about once per week. However, it obviously depends on which plants you have.

# Fish Emulsion as Nutrients

Another popular DIY liquid fertilizer is fish emulsion. Fish emulsion is made by mixing fish waste with Molasses to create a nutrient-rich liquid fertilizer. Fish emulsion is an excellent option for indoor gardeners who want to provide their plants with a boost of nutrients without spending a lot of money.

To make a fish emulsion, you'll need some fish waste, molasses, and a container to mix. You can use any type of fish waste, including fish guts, heads, and bones. Place the fish

waste in the container with the molasses. Let the mixture sit for 21-30 days. After several weeks, strain the liquid.

Once you've made your fish emulsion, you can use it to water your indoor plants. You want to dilute 2-5ml of fish emulsion in 1 liter of water.

You should apply it during the vegetative stage of the plant (between the germination stage and flowering stage). Spray it in the soil once a week.

## Seaweed Extract

Seaweed extract is another popular option for liquid nutrients for indoor plants. Seaweed extract is made by soaking dried seaweed in water to create a nutrient-rich liquid fertilizer. To make seaweed extract, you'll need some dried seaweed and a container to brew the fertilizer. Place the dried seaweed in the container and cover it with water. Let the mixture sit for several days, stirring occasionally. After several days, strain the liquid. Again, dilute with a ratio of one part to four parts water.

## Eggshell Water

Eggshells are rich in calcium, which is an essential nutrient for plants. To create a liquid fertilizer from eggshells, start by collecting your eggshells. Rinse them thoroughly to remove any remaining egg whites or yolks. Then let them dry completely. Once the eggshells are dry, crush them into small pieces.

Next, add the crushed eggshells to a container of water and let it sit for several days. The water will become infused with calcium from the eggshells, creating a nutrient-rich liquid fertilizer. Wait 3-7 days. Then strain the mixture. Add water, again about a 1:4 ratio, to create your liquid

nutrients for indoor plants.

## Vegetable Water

When you boil vegetables, many of the nutrients leach out of the vegetables and into the water. Instead of pouring this water down the drain, you can use it to fertilize your indoor plants. This is a great option for frugal gardeners who are interested in sustainability. It helps prevent the waste of that water while also helping you to grow your plants.

To create vegetable water fertilizer, start by boiling your vegetables as usual. Once the vegetables are cooked, strain them out of the water and let the water cool. You can then use this nutrient-rich water to fertilize your plants. You can also freeze the vegetable water in ice cube trays and use them as a slow-release fertilizer. This is especially great if you'll be going on vacation and leaving your plants alone for a short period of time.

## Urine as Liquid Nutrients for Indoor Plants

Okay, this might not be the right choice for everyone. Nevertheless, urine is a free resource that will indeed work as a plant nutrient if you are bold enough to try it. While it may sound unappealing, urine is actually a rich source of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. These are all essential nutrients for plant growth.

To create a liquid fertilizer from urine, start by collecting your urine in a container. You can use any clean, empty jar. Once you have collected your urine, dilute it with water at a ratio of 1:10 and mix well. You can then use this mixture to water your indoor plants, making sure to apply it evenly to the soil around the plant. Be careful not to get any on the leaves or stems of your plants, as this can cause burning.

Using urine as a liquid fertilizer may not be for everyone, but it is a unique and effective option that is free and readily available. It is important to note that if you are taking any medications, you should consult with your healthcare provider before using your urine as a fertilizer, as some medications can affect the composition of urine and make it harmful to plants.

## It’s All A Type Of “Tea”

As you can see, there are plenty of cheap and effective liquid nutrients for your plants that you can make at home. They’re all made creating a sort of “tea.” You choose the nutrient-rich item that you want as your base. Then your boil it, steep it, strain it, and dilute it. After that, you’re ready to use it!

Compost tea, fish emulsion, seaweed extract, eggshells, and vegetable water are all excellent options for creating nutrient-rich liquid fertilizers. By experimenting with these DIY options, you can find the perfect liquid fertilizer to meet your indoor plants’ needs without breaking the bank. Just remember to dilute the fertilizer with water before using it and to avoid over-fertilizing your plants, as this can cause damage and potentially harm your plants.

## Additional Links:

- 5 Reasons to Use Fish Amino Acid on Your Plants
- 2 Homemade Fertilizers You Can Sell
- Should I Use Enviro Ice on My Plants?

---

# Ponytail Palm Plant

*ponytail palm behind the couch on the left, image via Unspash @stephwilll*

I recently discovered a plant that I hadn't ever known before. It's called the ponytail palm. However, it's not actually a palm tree / plant at all. Instead, it's a succulent. And yet it looks just like a tiny little palm tree. It's adorable. I don't know why I've never come across this plant before. Now that I know about it, I'm seeing it everywhere.

## Discovering the Ponytail Palm Plant

Every month, my best friend and I try to get together at his place for what we call "wine and whine." It's just a friendship catch-up day of conversation and wine drinking.

Recently, his apartment has been taken over by plants. It's funny, because neither of us was ever really good with plants. We used to live together and I don't think we ever had a living plant in our shared apartment. I once bought him and his husband a bonsai tree, and I don't think it lasted a few months.

And yet, in recent months, my bestie has taken up indoor gardening. He's loving it. He's good at it!

So, as I've been going over there, his plant collection has grown. There were a few simple plants. Then there were some more complicated plants. He has plants that are on a weekly misting schedule. He waters other plants every few days. Over time, he has even repotted plants.

One of his most recent plant acquisitions, as you may have guessed, is the ponytail palm plant. He found it at a store while looking for new pots. He fell in love with it, he purchased it, and that's how I discovered it, sitting in the corner of his home.

## A Plant By Any Other Name …

My bestie actually introduced me to the plant as an elephant foot tree. You can see why when you look at it. After all, the trunk sure does look a lot like the foot of an elephant. However, I actually mis-remembered it as an elephant palm. It looks so much like a little palm tree. So, when I went to Google it and learn more about it, I typed in "elephant palm" and what came up was the ponytail palm tree.

According to the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, this plant's official name is *Nolina (Beaucarnea) recurvata.* We most commonly know it as the ponytail palm. However, you might also refer to it as a bottle palm. And, like I said before, people sometimes call it the elephant foot tree.

## A Palm, A Tree, A Succulent?

The ponytail palm looks like a palm tree. And yet, it’s not. Old Farmer’s Almanac explains that it’s more closely related to a Joshua Tree or a Yucca Tree. No wonder I’m drawn to this plant. I grew up in the Arizona desert. Therefore, I’m very familiar with these types of plants. I wouldn’t immediately think of the Joshua Tree when looking at the ponytail palm. Nevertheless, I see the family resemblance.

And, did you know, that the Joshua Tree isn’t a tree at all? It’s part of the agave family. And this, in turn, is a type of succulent. I’ve always loved succulents. That’s probably also the desert in me. So, again, no surprise that I found myself drawn to this plant.

## How Big Is a Ponytail Palm Tree?

My friend’s new little plant is less than one foot tall. That’s partly why I like it so much. It’s this tiny, cute little palm tree in a pot inside of the apartment. However, as I did my research, I learned that these plants can actually grow to be quite huge. According to The Almanac, they can grow naturally in the wild to 30 feet in height with leaves that extend six feet long.

Of course, they don’t get that large when cultivated in a garden. Moreover, when grown indoors, they will remain quite small. They’re usually only about four feet tall when grown indoors. So, it will be interesting to see how tall my friend’s plant will get. We will get together once a month and I can watch his baby grow!

## 5 Tips for Caring For a Ponytail

# Palm Tree

Since this isn’t my plant, I don’t actually have to worry about caring for it. That’s my friend’s job. And yet, I was curious about what kind of care it needs. Between my friend’s information and what I found online, here are the five best tips I have for taking care of an elephant foot plant:

## 1. Lots of Light

This makes sense for succulents, of course. They want a lot of sunshine.

## 2. Fast-Drying Soil

Likewise, these aren’t plants that want to sit in water. They don’t want to be very wet. Use a fast-drying soil that’s good for cacti and succulents. Keep the soil relatively dry even when watering. The top soil should be completely dry before you water the plant again.

## 3. How to Water a Ponytail Palm

Basically, you want to soak the soil so that it gets wet all through it. However, you want to use a pot with draining holes. Moreover, you want to make sure that the excess water all drains out. You don’t want wet soil for this plant. This can’t be reiterated enough, according to the Internet.

## 4. Room Temperature

The plant likes to be kept in room temperature. However, make that room a little bit chillier in the winter months. Your plant will thank you. That said, don’t let the plant sit too close to windows with cold air. You want a plant that recognizes it’s a little cooler during winter, but you certainly don’t want to freeze your plant.

## 5. Repot Every Year or Two

In order to keep the plant small, all that you really need to do is keep taking care of it in its small pot. However, you'll still need to repot it. Doing so once every year or two is ideal.

# Are Elephant Foot Plants Trending?

I didn't know about these plants until I saw my friend's recently. And yet, now that I know about them, I keep spotting them everywhere. For example, I went to a little store on Haight Street that only had a few plants among many other things and there one was! Is this a case of noticing what you're focused on? Or are these plants actually trending now?

*Are you familiar with the ponytail palm tree? What do you call it?*

PONYTAIL

# Palm Plant

WWW.FRUGALGARDENING.COM

## Additional Links:

- 5 Quick Tips to Rescue Your Plant from Root Rot
- The Christmas Cactus Plant
- 5 Things to Consider When Recycling Soil

---

# 5 Affordable Indoor Plants That You Might Also Get for Free

If you are looking for ways to improve the aesthetic of your home without spending a lot of money, you should consider indoor plants. Not only do they make your home look more

inviting, but many of them can also be obtained for free!

Follow along as we discuss 5 affordable indoor plants that you might also get for free.

# 1. Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera is a succulent that is known for its ability to heal cuts and burns. These plants are easy to care for and can be obtained for free from many friends or family members who have them growing in their homes. The next time you're visiting with someone that loves indoor plants, inquire about Aloe Vera. You may get lucky and walk away with some Aloe Vera of your own.

# 2. Snake Plant

Snake plants are another easy-to-care indoor plant that can often be obtained for free. These plants get their name from their long, snake-like leaves and can grow to be quite large. If you have a friend or family member who is looking to downsize their indoor plant collection, see if they would be willing to part with a snake plant or two.

# 3. Spider Plant

Spider plants are a type of flowering plant that is known for their ability to purify the air. These plants are easy to grow and can often be found for free at plant swaps. If you're looking for an indoor plant that will not only improve the aesthetic of your home but also help to purify the air, a spider plant is a great option.

# 4. Boston Fern

Boston ferns are a type of fern that is known for their ability to thrive in humid environments. If you have a

bathroom with little natural light, a Boston fern would be a great addition. Many people tend to have several Boston ferns in their homes and sometimes hanging on their front porches. A kind ask can score you one of these indoor gems for free.

## 5. Peace Lily

Peace lilies are a type of flowering plant that is known for their ability to thrive in shady areas. If you have a room in your home that doesn't get a lot of natural light, a peace lily would be a great option. These plants are also known for their ability to reduce airborne toxins, making them a great choice for any home.

If you're looking to improve the aesthetic of your home without breaking the bank, consider adding some of these plants to your collection.

Do you have a favorite indoor plant that didn't make our list? Let us know in the comments below!

**Read More:**

4 Frugal Ways To Set Up a Greenhouse

Best Garden Instagram Accounts for Inspiration

6 Gardening Tips For Beginners

---

# Indoor Plants That Produce Soothing Aromas

For over a year now, many people have spent more time indoors than usual. The bonus? More time to admire your indoor plants? The downside? Well, truthfully, there are a lot. But plant-

wise, it’s probably realizing that most of your pretty plants don’t do much to refresh the stale air in your home. So add these indoor plants that produce soothing aromas to your space to freshen up your living quarters.

## Set Realistic Expectations

A lot of people have unrealistic expectations about what their houseplants can do. No, adorning your home with plants won’t remove every single airborne toxin. And while these indoor plants that produce soothing aromas can help deliver a dollop of fragrance, they won’t envelop your home in a floral perfume. Tamper your expectations. Because these plants won’t replace your trusty air freshener, placement is key. Save these plants for walk-by areas so you can enjoy a pleasant whiff as you pass by.

## Most Herbs

Most herbs are easy to grow indoors and have a strong scent. The type of herb you choose obviously depends on your scent preferences. Keep in mind that herbs require a bit more maintenance than many popular houseplants. You’ll have to water them more often and harvest the leaves to prevent flowering.

Keep herbs near the kitchen, so they’re easy to grab when you’re cooking or plating.

## Eucalyptus

You can grow eucalyptus indoors, but dried eucalyptus branches are even easier to deal with. You can style them in a large vase or hang them in the bathroom. Then, when you take a shower, the humid space will fill with a burst of freshness.

## Scented Geranium

Not all scented geraniums are made equal. Some give off more pungent smells that are better for outdoor growing and keeping away mosquitoes. But there are also plenty of geraniums that give off pleasant aromas like lemon and chocolate.

These plants need lots of light and some pruning to keep their shape. They also like consistent moisture levels.

## Citrus

A little trickier to care for than most houseplants, citrus plants like lemon, lime, and grapefruit, produce fragrant blossoms with a heavenly scent. You'll need to give these plants plenty of light and adequate humidity levels. Keeping them away from drafty parts of your house is also key to preventing stress-related problems.

## Hoya

I've currently got a little hoya plant on my office bookshelf, but it's not even close to big enough to produce flowers. When it eventually blooms, though, the blossoms will give off a subtle, sweet scent. To bloom, hoya needs a lot of light, so keep it in a bright area. Water only once the soil has dried up between waterings.

## A Word of Caution

Many scented plants are bad news for pets, and some can even be harmful to humans. So if you have cats, dogs, or other domesticated animals wandering about, be sure to check whether a plant is toxic before putting it within reach of curious noses and mouths. Want to find out if a plant is poisonous? Check out the ASPCA's list of toxic and non-toxic plants.

**Read More:**

- Where to Buy Seeds for Microgreens
- How to Get Plant Spacing Right
- A Frugal Gardener Is a Patient Gardener

---

# Please, I Beg You. Bring in Your Tender Potted Plants!

Every year around this time as I walk around the neighborhood with my dogs or pass by homes on my morning runs, I see the insane amount of people who throw away potted plants. In the summer, when the weather is hot and toasty, people calmer to buy all the beautiful plants at the nursery. In the spring, baskets of flowers are popular. In the middle of the summer, people buy tropical palms and glorious ferns to hang around their backyard patios. Now, during the fall, its

chrysanthemums are all the rage. Pumpkins start to appear on front porches, too.

I love seeing all this plant life around town. And I'm just as susceptible to plant sales and attractive displays of greenery. This summer, I brought a gorgeous banana plant home and found it a home on my back deck among a pretty display of string lights. With a single plant, I created a tropical atmosphere and made the space the perfect place to relax, unwind, and entertain.

Almost as soon as September rolled around, though, the nighttime temperatures dipped considerably. Afraid that my plants (I also bought two pink-stemmed plants to adorn my patio table) would succumb to the cold, I promptly brought them inside.

I urge all plant lovers and frugal gardeners to do the same! Those beautiful heat-loving tropicals can't hack frosty temps, and while some are more tender than others, it's better to be safe than sorry. Bring in your potted plants and enjoy their blooms and foliage for an extended period of time.

I placed my banana tree in my living room, and it's my new favorite place to hang out. I feel like I'm in a cozy indoor oasis. Don't leave your plants out to die! Don't let them wither away! What a waste of money! Take care of your precious plants by sheltering them from the cold, and you'll be rewarded with a continued display of beauty. If you manage to adequately care for your plants during the winter, you'll be able to set them out again once the weather warms. You'll escape the need to spend money next spring.

Many potted plants don't need as much attention in the winter anyhow, so bringing them in won't leave you with extra work on your hands. Watering needs typically diminish during the cold months. Tropical plants, however, may require higher levels of humidity than are possible in your winter home. Place a

humidifier nearby or spritz your plants with a spray bottle every so often. The spring is the best time to re-home your plant into a slightly larger vessel.

Don’t have any tropical plants or potted flowers to bring inside? If you have a potted vegetable plant, it may be a good idea to bring that in, as well. Shelter potted peppers indoors and you’ll have an extended harvest. Give them plenty of warmth and sunlight, and you’ll be able to pick peppers throughout the off-season.

Do you bring your potted plants indoors? Have you been able to keep a plant alive for more than a season this way? Share your story in the comments!