

5 Quick Tips To Rescue Your Plants From Root Rot

I am prone to overwatering my plants. I suspect that this comes from growing up in the desert. That might sound counterintuitive. However, I have this reverence for the magic of water as a result of my desert upbringing. And so subconsciously I tend to think that water will solve all plant problems. Which, of course, is not true. In fact, overwatering contributes to one of the most common causes of plant death: root rot. Luckily, you can prevent this problem once you're aware of it. Moreover, if you catch it early enough, you can rescue your plants from root rot.

What Is Root Rot?

Do you have a plant that doesn't seem to be growing properly despite watering it regularly? Are the leaves wilting even though the soil is wet? Do the stems feel mushy to the touch? How about the roots – if you look at them, are they the right color? Or are they more of a red-brown shade than they ought to be? Finally, how does the soil smell? If it smells “off” and you see these other symptoms, chances are that you have root rot.

As the name suggests, the roots of your plant are rotting away. Root rot is actually a disease. [Blossom Plant](#) explains that it has two common causes: overwatering and harmful fungi. In my case, it's usually been due to overwatering, as I explained. However, even if you are great at watering your plants properly, they may develop root rot as a result of the growth of bacterial fungi.

Sadly, once you start seeing the symptoms of root rot described above, it might be too late to rescue your plants from root rot. However, it's worth a try. Caught early enough,

there are definitely things that you can do to save your plants.

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The most important thing that you can do is to keep a close eye on your plants. This way, you catch problems early. If caught early, try these five things to rescue your plants from root rot:

1. Carefully Cut Away the Rotting Roots

You can't actually "cure" root rot. In other words, you must remove the roots that are rotting. In order to do this, you will have to carefully remove the plant from the soil. Then, you will have to remove the soil from the roots as much as possible. This allows you to look at the roots. Hopefully, plenty look thriving, meaning they are vibrant, white, and beautiful. The ones with root rot will look stringy and brown, as though they are dying – because they are. Alternatively, they may be a grey color and may feel slimy to the touch. Carefully cut away all of the rotting roots. You should cut just slightly above the damaged part. Maintain as many healthy roots as possible.

2. Carefully Cut Away the Dying Leaves

Cutting away the rotting roots is the most important part of rescuing your plant. However, you don't want to leave other dying parts of the plant either. After all, you want to give your plant the best chance of survival. You want healthy roots to support the healthy growth of the rest of the plant. Therefore, you will also want to trim away all of the dying leaves on your plant. Be selective – trim away what you're sure is dying but leave what might potentially grow well.

3. Repot Your Plant in Fresh Soil

Regardless of the cause of root rot, the soil is now a problem. If you've overwatered it, you can certainly let it dry out. Nevertheless, it's not healthy enough to support the full healing of your plants. Of course, if bacteria is the cause of your root rot, then you want to get rid of the soil that has that bacteria, right? So, it's time to get rid of all of that soil. Remove as much of it as you safely can from the roots of the plant. Get rid of all soil that is in the pot. Get fresh, healthy, new, dry soil and repot the plant.

4. Skip the Fertilizer for Now

[Plants in a Box](#) explains that your plant is fragile from root rot. Therefore, you don't want to add the stress of fertilizer right now. Instead, just make sure that you use high-quality soil for repotting. Then hold off on fertilizer for the time being. Give the plant time to revive.

5. Review Your Plant's Proper Care

Even if you think that you know your plants well, it's worth it to refresh your memory. Do a little bit of research into exactly what the best conditions are for this plant to thrive. Pay careful attention to the watering instructions, of course.

But also look at the sunlight it needs, the temperature it does best in, etc. You want to give your plant as much TLC as possible while it's working to heal.

How to Prevent Root Rot in the Future

Although you can do these things to try to rescue your plants from root rot, sometimes it just isn't going to work. Once you start seeing the signs of a rotting plant, it might be too late. Therefore, preventing root rot is really the way to go.

Do all that you can to prevent it in the future so that you don't have to try to save your plants down the line.

Some of the key ways to prevent root rot include:

- Remember to check exactly what conditions are best for each particular plant.
- Be careful not to overwater your plants.
- Use the right soil to get proper drainage for each plant.
- Also, use the right pot, preferably with drainage holes, to prevent standing water.
- Check your plants regularly. Pay attention to how they look, how they smell, and what the soil is like. Catch problems early on.

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