

Packing Plants for Transport

Packing plants for moving or shipping can feel daunting. Yet, you put so much care and effort into these beings that you can't imagine them being damaged during transport.

I will show you how to pack seeds, cuttings, bare-root plants, and whole plants for transport.

Transporting Seeds

Seeds are the easiest things to transport.

Start with clean, dry seeds. It is vital that they are dry. Wet seeds may begin to germinate or grow mold.

Then pack them in a paper envelope labeled with the type of seed and year.

Last, pack the envelopes into a plastic box or another waterproof container to keep them dry during the journey.

Transporting Cuttings

Taking a cutting is one of the easiest ways to propagate plants.

If you are shipping or moving with a cutting, you can easily pack it to protect it.

First, you must wait to cut it off the mother plant as close to leaving as possible. Then, cut in a diagonal line to allow for maximum water transfer from packing materials.

Then you want to remove most of the leaves on the cutting. This reduces the energy needs of the cutting so that it can stay alive longer.

Next, you want to wrap the cut end of the plant in a damp paper towel or sphagnum moss. It is essential to make sure the towel or moss is only damp. Too much water may let mold grow during the transport process.

Fourth, you need to put the cut end and wet towel into a plastic bag, but do not place the leaves of the cutting into the bag.

Fifth, tape the bag closed to keep the water in, then tape the bag and stem of the cutting to the side of the box you will be shipping it in. This will help keep the plant still, ensure the cut end stays wet, and prevent damage to the stem and leaves.

Lastly, fill the rest of the box with soft packing material, like sphagnum moss, to help absorb shocks during the rough parts of shipping.

Protip: If you are traveling with your cuttings, it is a good idea to keep them handy, so you can check the water levels and for damage.

Transporting Bare-Root Plants

Trees, shrubs, and bushes are usually sold as bare-root plants. This means they are dug up once they are dormant and then prepared for transport.

Dormancy is when deciduous plants do not grow and lose their leaves. It usually happens during winter, although we can use artificial lighting setups to force dormancy.

If you are transporting a bare-root plant, you need only to remove as much dirt as possible.

Then wrap the roots in slightly damp burlap. You want only enough water to keep the roots from drying out completely. Remember, too much water can compromise your plant and cause

damage to the plant or allow mold to thrive.

Next, you need to trim the shoots of the plant. Trim them enough so they easily fit into the space you will use to transport them.

If you are shipping them in a box, secure the wet burlap in plastic, then tape the plastic bag and shoot to the side of the box. Then fill the container with soft packing material like sphagnum moss.

Transporting Whole Plants

Packaging whole plants for transport is relatively easy.

First, you need to make sure they are in the appropriate pot. The pot needs to be the right size and plastic so it won't break from hard shocks during shipping. Bonus points: If the pot is slightly flexible, you can squish multiple pots together to fit them into tight spaces.

Next, you need to protect the foliage.

The easiest way is to wrap the plant in plastic, burlap, or netting. Start at the base of the plant and wrap up, so all the foliage points up. Do not wrap tightly as you will damage the vegetation. Instead, keep a loose wrap so the plant can move with the transport stress.

Conclusion

If you are shipping plants, check with your local post office because you may need to label the box in a particular way.

Shipping or moving with plants is stressful, but with a bit of prep, you can do it in a way that protects your plants.

Have you ever received a shipped plant before? I have. It was a beautiful cutting of a variety of Pothos houseplant.

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