

smart Living

IT'S A GREEN SCENE



Now that we are having such lovely sunny weather, it is a great time to look at indoor plants as a decorating tool to change the feel of a room for the summer months.

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Plants provide liveliness and freshness to a space. They can brighten up the mood of a bare room and as they are often fairly inexpensive, can be changed and updated depending on the season. Plants can also offer splashes of colour and add to the 'lived in' qualities of a room.

Large potted plants can serve as room dividers or help to define the space within a larger area. Tall plants can add a dimension of height to an area and lead the eye upwards - they work exceptionally well in units where rooms are generally small with lower ceilings. Small plants arranged in groups can assist with developing an intimate feel for a room as they draw the attention in.

"Indoor plants can be used to enhance your personal style and taste."

No matter what your decorating style, indoor plants can be used to enhance your personal style and taste. A classic interior can be complemented with structured plants in symmetrical pairs. In contrast, a coastal interior style deserves leafy palms or earthy succulents.

Elodie Bilanycz from the International School of Colour and Design often uses indoor plants to make a room feel finished. "To me, indoor plants complete a room," she

says. "They can bring life to a neutral palette and I love the fact they can be easily changed and repositioned."

Lighting can also enhance the impact of plants and throw interesting shadows onto bare walls. Uplighting a potted plant adds to its presence in a room, a downlight increases the decorative brilliance of the leaves especially those of large scale plants and this can create a sense of extravagance and luxury.

A simple and practical way to start your indoor plant journey is through the creation of an herb garden. Not only will this assist with the creation of culinary masterpieces but it also adds a decorative flair to a kitchen.

A great place to start is by using herbs such as chives, thyme and sage that have similar moisture and lighting needs. Combine these herbs in the one container and ensure they receive up to six hours of daylight each day to keep them looking their best. **P.**

Through its workshops, foundation course and diplomas, the International School of Colour and Design prepares its pupils for roles as stylists and designers for leisure or professional development.
www.iscd.edu.au or phone 9114 5988.



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HINTS AND TIPS FOR INDOOR PLANTS FROM THE ISCD

- 1.** Crotons love the indoor life and are one of the most colourful plants you can find. Their broad, long leaves can display reds, yellows, pinks, greens and yellows and their exotic look immediately brightens up any room.
- 2.** A popular table decoration is the cyclamen. Keep them looking their best by putting them outside at night.
- 3.** Euphorbia are a flexible succulent and come in a multitude of different shapes. Put them near a window and make sure you rotate them into the light so they grow easily.
- 4.** Dress up a sunny windowsill by arranging a variety of different coloured pots with smaller flowering orchids – they will last for ages.
- 5.** Maidenhair ferns look fantastic in white kitchens or bathrooms.
- 6.** Indoor plants absorb many of the toxins generated by the materials used in modern households today, and they give oxygen to freshen and liven the air in closed living spaces.
- 7.** Always check the status of the leaves on your indoor plants. If they turn much darker than normal then they need more light, a yellowish tinge to them indicates they are being overwatered.
- 8.** When watering indoor plants use water that is at room temperature - not cold tap temperature. Run your water into a bucket and let it reach room temperature before using it.
- 9.** For those who often forget to water plants, the Pontytail Palm is for you – it is considered to be the easiest growing indoor home plant! Pop it into a large decorative pot and leave it alone to work its magic.
- 10.** If you have a dark room that does not get much natural sunlight – peace lilies, silver lace fern and the snake plant are all for you. **P.**



'The art of relaxing begins with making the most of all the spaces in your home.'

JAKOB GAMBORG
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