

Clivia Care Handbook

The patient, long-lived bush lily

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A GreenNest Plant Guide

Clivia miniata, the bush lily, is a tough South African evergreen with fans of strappy leaves and dramatic clusters of orange trumpet flowers. It thrives on bright indirect light, snug roots, and a cool, dry winter rest that triggers the spring bloom. This handbook covers Clivia miniata, its rest-and-bloom rhythm, and why the best-flowering plants are often the least fussed-over.

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Clivia - Clivia miniata

Clivia miniata, the clivia or bush lily, is a South African evergreen that grows strappy dark-green leaves from a fan and sends up bold clusters of orange trumpet flowers in late winter or spring.

Care at a glance: light: bright indirect light, with a little gentle morning or evening sun; water deeply every ~10 days (far less in winter); a moisture-retentive but well-aerated mix; happiest around 40-80F; propagate by splitting the clump at repotting or fresh seed sown on the surface; keep it away from cats and dogs.

Quick facts

- Light: bright indirect light, with a little gentle morning or evening sun.
- Water: deeply every ~10 days, far less in winter.
- Temperature: 40-80F (4-27C).
- Humidity: average home humidity is fine.
- Soil: a moisture-retentive but well-aerated mix.
- Propagate: splitting the clump at repotting or fresh seed sown on the surface.
- Pet: keep away from cats and dogs.

Clivia needs a cool, nearly dry rest of six to eight weeks around 50 degF in winter -- skip that chill and it will often refuse to flower, no matter how well you treat it the rest of the year.

General Care Principles

No matter the species in this handbook, a handful of principles carry most of the weight. Get these right and the individual notes above become fine-tuning.

Match the plant to the light: sun-lovers go in the brightest window or under a grow light; shade-lovers go in east or north light. Wrong light is the single most common cause of failure.

Water on the plant's schedule, not the calendar. Soak thoroughly, then let the soil dry before the next drink. In winter, ease right off - most of these plants want a cool, dry rest.

Use the right soil and a draining pot. Free-draining for succulents, moisture-retentive but aerated

for ferns and foliage. A drainage hole is non-negotiable.

Propagate to multiply. Almost every plant here can be cloned from a leaf, offset, division, or cutting - see each species for its best method.

Frequently Asked Questions

How often should I really water?

Forget frequent sips. Soak the soil completely, then let it dry out fully before the next drink. In winter most of these plants want a long, dry rest. The lift test (light pot = dry) beats any calendar.

My plant is stretching and pale - what does that mean?

It wants more light. Move it to a brighter window or add a full-spectrum LED grow light. New growth will be compact and colourful; the stretched part will not undo itself, so behead and re-root the top if you like.

What soil should I use?

A free-draining mix is non-negotiable. For succulents that means gritty, sandy soil in a pot with a real drainage hole. For leafy types a peat-free houseplant mix is fine. Sitting in wet soil is the fastest route to rot.

Is this plant safe around my pets?

We note pet safety per species in this guide. 'Pet-safe' means it is not on the usual toxic lists, but no plant is food - keep curious cats and dogs from chewing leaves, and call a vet if you are worried.

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