

You may be thinking, “Wait, what are bracts?”

Bracts are the red or colorful part of the poinsettia. They are often mistaken as flowers, as they appear flower-like.

... So, where are the flowers?

The flowers are actually inside that small yellow cluster in the middle of the bracts. This cluster is called a *cyathium*.

Cultivated poinsettias are carefully bred and selected so that the cyathia are smaller in appearance, as we want the beautiful bracts to steal the show!

Poinsettia bracts come in a vast range of colors and patterns, with more being created by professional plant breeders every year.

Are Poinsettias Poisonous?

No! Toxicology studies support that poinsettias are not toxic to humans or pets, but they may cause stomach upset if eaten in large quantities, and their sap could cause mild skin irritation.

After the Holidays

After the holiday season has ended, you can keep your poinsettia as a houseplant! The bracts will eventually change to all-green. As you see new growth closer to spring, be sure to fertilize with an all-purpose houseplant fertilizer.

It may be a difficult task to get the poinsettia to re-bloom, as it will only do so under specific light conditions.

The good news is, you can always come back to Van Wingerden's to purchase a new, colorful poinsettia for the holidays!

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!
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How to Care for Your Poinsettia



In this Care Guide, you will find Poinsettia facts and all our tips and tricks for keeping your Poinsettias looking vibrant and fresh all the way to Christmas Day.

Poinsettia Facts

Poinsettias are a shrub that are part of the *euphorbia* family. Their scientific name is *euphorbia pulcherrima*. They are native to the mountains of central to southern Mexico, where they grow in sub-tropical forests.



Image: victor_evg, iNaturalist.com

In their natural habitat, they can get quite tall with long branches. In horticulture, poinsettias are cultivated so they retain a compact shape that is attractive to consumers.

Their leafy bracts change color in response to changes in light - but they do not stay colorful all year. The bracts change color so that the plant saves energy as it is blooming.

Poinsettia Care

Temperature

Poinsettias are a sub-tropical plant that thrive in 65-75 degrees - luckily, household temperatures usually fall within this range!

Be sure to place your poinsettia somewhere where it won't be exposed to dramatic changes in temperature or drafts. Keep the poinsettia away from doors that open to outside, heaters, and heat vents.

Poinsettias cannot go outside in the winter. Being exposed to freezing temperatures will kill them.



Light

Poinsettias need bright, filtered light throughout the day. Near a South, East, or West window would be ideal for light exposure. Too much direct light may cause leaf damage.

Watering

Poinsettias don't like to dry out, but they don't like to be in soil that is too wet, either.

Grower Tip: Use the **1 to 5 method** to know how much and how often to water your plant.

1 = soil is bone-dry

5 = soil is completely saturated

Keeping this range in mind, poinsettias like to stay somewhere in the middle, around a **3**, which could be considered "evenly moist" soil.

How often you need to water mostly depends on the conditions of your home/office/etc. A good rule of thumb is to check once or twice a week.

Watering Instructions:

Water thoroughly so that water flows through the drainage holes at the bottom of the pot. If the poinsettia is in a decorative foil or cache pot, immediately discard any excess water that has collected in it - they do not like to sit in water, as this can cause their roots to rot!

During the holiday season, there is no need to fertilize your poinsettia.