



# Columbia Nursery

## Caring for Air Plants (Tillandsia)

A Quick Guide from Columbia Nursery

### What Makes Tillandsia Special?

Unlike traditional plants, air plants don't rely on soil to survive. Instead, they attach themselves to trees, rocks, or other surfaces using their roots—just for support. All their water and nutrients come through their leaves! Tiny specialized cells called trichomes absorb moisture from the air and give many air plants a silvery or grayish look. Some air plants even change color when they prepare to bloom, and a few varieties have incredibly fragrant flowers.

### Indoor Care Basics

Air plants are low-maintenance, but like all plants, they have a few simple needs:

#### Light

- Place your air plant in bright, indirect light.
- An East or North-facing window is ideal.
- If natural light is limited, you can supplement with a broad-spectrum fluorescent light for short periods.

#### Water

- Soak your air plant completely for 1 hour every 2–3 weeks in summer and every 3–4 weeks in winter.
- After soaking, turn the plant upside down to let any extra water drain out. This prevents rot.
- If your indoor air is extra dry from heating or air conditioning, you may need to mist or soak your plant more often.
- Watch for curling leaves—that's a sign your plant needs more water.

#### Fertilizer

- Air plants don't require fertilizer, but using it once a month will help promote healthy growth and vibrant blooms.
- Use a liquid or water-soluble fertilizer that is low in copper (high copper levels are harmful to bromeliads).

### Mounting Your Air Plant

One of the best parts about air plants is the freedom to get creative with how you display them! They can be mounted on:

- Driftwood or tree branches
- Cork bark or clay pottery
- Rocks or stones
- Or simply hang them on their own

### Important Mounting Tips

- Never use treated wood—the chemicals (especially copper) used in treatment are toxic to air plants.
- Make sure the material you mount them on doesn't hold moisture, to avoid rot.
- Use a non-toxic adhesive, such as E6000 glue, to secure the plant. It's strong, clear, waterproof, and plant-safe.
- Apply glue near the base of the plant, but don't cover the root area. This allows your air plant to naturally anchor itself over time.
- Let the glue set for about 30–60 minutes, depending on the size of your plant.



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## Why We Love Air Plants at Columbia Nursery

Air plants offer flexibility, creativity, and fun for both new and experienced plant lovers. They make great gifts, conversation pieces, and home décor. Whether you're crafting a unique wall display or just setting a few on a shelf, air plants bring a touch of nature indoors without the fuss of traditional houseplants.

Stop by Columbia Nursery to explore our air plant collection and find the perfect ones for your home!

## Need more help?

Our staff is happy to answer any questions and help you choose the right air plants for your space.