BEYOND WATER:

Different Propagating Techniques

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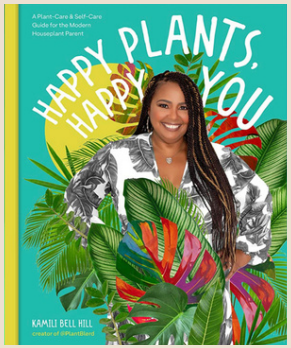


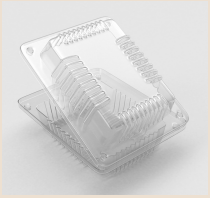
@PlantBlerd

THE RIGHT CUT

- **No matter what medium you are using to root in, nothing is more important than making the right cut! Every cutting must include a node.**
- **The node contains the blueprint to make the new plant. Without a node, you will just end up with a zombie leaf with roots, but it will never develop into a plant. That is what often happens with the cute little one-leaf heart shaped Hoya Kerrii that are very popular around Valentine's day.**
- **Where is the node? Nodes are located where the new leaf connects to the stem. Even if the leaf has dropped off, the node tissue is still in there where it once was. You can spot a node even on a leafless stem because the area is slightly bulging--like a knuckle on a finger.**
- **There are of course some exceptions--like Begonias, succulents and Peperomias which can all be propagated from a leaf.**
- **In general, always cut just below the node to insure success!**
- **So you've made your cut, and now you are ready to move beyond water to root. Let's go!**

A FEW HELPFUL TOOLS:

Rooting powder speeds things up. While you do not NEED it, it is a tool that can aid in successful rooting.



Save those lidded plastic containers. They are perfect for rooting cuttings that need a little extra humidity.

Clean sharp scissors. No matter which medium you are rooting in, you want to get a good clean cut.

Plastic wrap to to wrap the clump of moss when air layering. There are fancy globes you can find online, but this works perfectly well and you probably have some laying around.

PERLITE

How To:

- Perlite is a type of volcanic glass that is commonly used as a soil amendment. It both aerates the soil and helps to retain water.
- It is a great medium for propagating plants because it can retain moisture and provide optimal air flow for the developing roots.
- Because there is so much airflow, there is less risk of the cutting rotting. It is a great option for rooting leafless nodes.
- Cuttings rooted in perlite have a hight success rate of transitioning to soil.
- You'll need two containers: one with drainage holes and one without.
- Fill the container with holes about 3/4 with perlite, and add your cuttings;
- Drop the container into the container without holes. This will act as your resevoir. Fill it with water, and let the perlite absorb the water. Refill the resevoir every 7-10 days.
- Place in warm well lit area, but no need for direct light on the cuttings.
- When roots reach approximately 2", transfer to whatever potting medium you will grow in.
- There is no need to remove all perlite completely from the new roots.

SPHAGNUM MOSS

How to:

- Sphagnum moss is commonly used for its ability to retain moisture. It is great soil top dressing for plants that need a little extra humidity. Its also the material used whenever you hear reference to the ubiquitous mosspoles.
- But where it really shines, is in propagating!
- It is a great medium to use for fussy hard to root plants that tend to rot in a water propagation.
- First things first, hydrate you moss. Let the dry moss soak for at least an hour prior to use. Add a diluted liquid fertilizer to the water.
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For Multiple cuttings:

- You will need a container with a cover, to maintain moisture in the moss. Upcycled plastic salad clamshells are perfect for propagating.
- Generously layer the bottom of the container with the moistened moss. Make sure to give a squeeze to get rid of excess water. You do not want it to be soaking wet.
- Lay your cuttings on the moss. If you are using cutting from plants with aerial roots such as Pothos, Monsteras, Philodendron, etc, make sure the aerial root is in the moss. However, do not bury the cutting in the moss.
- Poke holes in the lid of the container to allow air flow.
- Place it in warm brightly lit area.

Single Cutting:

- Wrap the end of cutting in clump of moistened moss;
- Place it in a container, cover the opening with plastic wrap to seal in the mositure.
- Place in a warm well lit area.
- Once rooted, there is no need to fully remove all of hte moss.

AIR LAYERING

How to:

- This technique is practically fail proof, and great for taking large top cuttings of plants. Once again, its time for sphagnum moss to SHINE!
- Moisten your moss. Allow it to soak for at least an hour;
- For this technique, you do not cut the plant. You are going to root the plant while it is still growing.
- For plants with aerial roots, you will place a clump of moistened moss on an aerial root;
- For plants without aerial roots and woodsy stems like rubber plants and fiddle leaf figs, you will cut a small notch below a node and place a clump of moistened moss over the notch.
- For both of the above, you will wrap the entire clump with plastic wrap, and seal the ends with velcro tape.
- Continue to care for the plant as you normally would. No need to change any care routine.
- Keep an eye on the moss, and make sure it is continually moist;
- When you see roots, cut just below to take the cutting.
- Now you have a full plant that is ready to go!
- One of the main benefits of air layering, is the newly rooted plant is an identical copy of the mother plant. If you air layered a highly variegated plant, that is what you will get with the new plant.
- Another added benefit of air layering, is the new leaves will come in close to or the same size as the newly propagated plant unlike plants grown from cuttings.

SOIL

How To:

- The biggest advantage of propagating directly in soil is that you will not have to transfer the plant once it roots. Propagate in the container you will grow in and just let it be.
- It can be used for any plant, but is especially great for succulents.
- When propagating in soil, it is best to thoroughly moisten the soil first.

SUCCULENTS:

- If you are propagating succulents, gently twist the leaves off of the stem.
- Place the leaves on a paper towel, and allow them to callous for at least 2 days before propagating.
- Again, plastic containers with lids are perfect for this method. Poke holes in the lid for air flow.
- Once calloused, arrange the leaves on top of moistened soil. Do not bury the leaves. Cover to maintain humidity, and place it in a warm brightly lit area.
- The leaves will root and begin to form little plantlets directly on the mother leaf. When the mother leaf is completely spent gently remove it.

ALL OTHER PLANTS:

- For all other plants, cut just below the node. If the plant has aerial roots, make sure the cutting also has an aerial root.
- Remove any lower leaves.
- Using a chopstick or similiarly shaped tool, make a hole in the soil and place the cutting in making sure to bury the node and aerial root in the soil. Do not bury any leaves below soil level.
- Again, maintaining humidity is key. Drop the plant in a ziploc or use a plastic storage tub as a “prop box” until the plant is rooted.
- You cannot see the roots, so this where its a bit of a guessing game. Err on the side of caution and give the cuttings at least 4 weeks to do there thing.