



WEEPING FIG

Ficus Benjamina, Ficus Nitida, Ficus Nuda

Ficus Benjamina is a "high-light" plant. It must be in a direct, or close to a direct light source. Given the proper care and environment they can be splendid. If environment is poor, they quickly deteriorate and are most unsatisfactory. A proper environment would include a light room, a south, west, or east window. The south light exposure will be the best but the east or west is adequate provided it is close to the light source and sheer curtains are open November through January.

Water

The best water meter is your finger. Push your finger into the soil. This top layer of soil must feel dry before watering. If this top layer of soil feels moist and cool, check again in a few days. These ficus plants should be allowed to dry moderately between waterings in order to replenish the oxygen supply to the roots. Never allow the soil ball to become completely dry or devoid of any moisture. Generally speaking, a popular sized plant in a 10" diameter pot, in average indoor conditions, should require watering at one- to three-week intervals, probably, ten days to two weeks. Smaller plants in hot rooms may need water weekly, while larger sizes in cooler locations may be happy with water possibly every third week.

How to Water

Use tepid water, that is, room temperature and as high as 80F or 27C. Water the soil surface quickly so that the entire surface is flooded uniformly. If poured on in one location only water will make canals through the soil resulting in uneven to dry spots in the soil ball, putting the plant under stress and causing damage.

How Much Water

Always enough that about 20% of the total volume of water used leaches out the drainage holes. This rinsing action is a very necessary tool in good potting soil maintenance. Never let the plant sit in this rinse water. It often contains toxic elements. All varieties of ficus have very dense, matted root systems. During the necessary drying period between watering, the soil ball may shrink away a little from the sides of the pot. If you see this happening, press some potting soil down the edges of the pot with a small stick to fill this cavity. This will ensure that the water will not escape down the inside of the pot without wetting the soil ball.

Fertilizer

Yes, during the months of April through September at the manufacturer's recommended dosage and frequency. No, during the months of October through March. As plants are not really growing at this time due to the lack of light, fertilizer is not needed.

Repotting

These plants like slightly cramped root conditions. Use pots, which look as though they are a size too small. Move plants into pots just one size larger when repotting is necessary as indicated by the emergence of a lot of root through drainage holes and possibly, by the appearance of a network of fine roots on the surface of the soil. Repotting is best carried out in spring. When maximum, convenient, pot size has been reached, top dress annually with fresh potting mixture at the same time of year.

Propagation

These plants may be propagated by the process of air layering. A care sheet explaining this process is available at [Plant World](#).