



BOUGAINVILLEA

Paper Flower

This showy climber is reminiscent of the south where huge specimens trail over walls and balconies. Originally from Brazil, bougainvillea thrives in many subtropical areas. The spiny wood stems have oval leaves, which may be green or variegated, but this plants most striking feature are the flowers. The blooms are made up of three colourful papery bracts, which surround small cream flowers. The colours of the bracts may be white, yellow, peach, soft pink, fuchsia, orange or red, and are often in clusters of 10-20.

LIGHT:

Bougainvillea need a location with at least four hours of direct sunlight in order to bloom.

TEMPERATURE:

Regular room temperatures are fine during active growth period with cool temperatures (but not below 50 degrees F.) in winter. Mist frequently or stand in a tray of moist pebbles when room temperature is warmer.

WATER:

Water bouganvilleas moderately, allow the top 1" - 2" of potting mix to dry in between watering. Be generous when watering; soak the root ball thoroughly. In winter, water sparingly, only enough to moisten the potting mix. Make sure that the pot does not stand in drainage water.

REPOTTING:

Use an organic soil-based mixture with plenty of peat moss.

FERTILIZE:

Feed with a water-soluble plant food such as 20-20-20 at the ratio of 1/4 to 1/2 a teaspoon per litre from March through November.