

Weeping Fig

General Comments:

Many designers favor Ficus benjamina because of its graceful arching branches, loaded with glossy, pointed, leaves, growing 2' to 18' tall.

Ficus does well with good light, rich soil kept evenly moist (let plant approach dryness before watering) and light feeding. Guard against over-watering, protect from cold drafts, dry heat and sudden changes in environment. If moved to a new location, tree will lose a few leaves, but with care will flourish again.

Light:

Place in a bright, directly lit south, east or west window. Plants with variegated leaves need more sun, preferably 5 or more hours of sun to keep their color bright. Ficus can grow without sun, but will shed 50 - 75 % of their leaves.

Water and Humidity

Let plant approach dryness before watering, then water thoroughly, discarding drainage after 15 minutes. Average indoor humidity levels.

Temperatures:

Average home temp of 65° - 72° F but 55° - 90° F is just fine.

Fertilization:

Feed every 6 to 7 weeks with 30-10-10. Newly potted or purchased plants should not be fertilized for six weeks.

Grooming:

Prune to a tree form as plant matures. Keep to desired height by shaping with light pruning or clipping at any time, or prune hard in June or July as needed.

Repotting:

Ficus does very well in relatively small containers even though roots are crowded. Infrequent potting is best, but when plants become too crowded, evidenced by a general lack of flourishing and new leaves, repot in late spring or early summer. Use standard soil. If plant has reached maximum size for your room, root-prune instead of moving to a larger pot. You may also pinch off the growing tip. (If pinched, dust the cut with powdered charcoal or ash to stop the milky sap flow.)

Problems:

Ficus benjamina is prey to scale. To control, use systemic granules. Dry soil or high soluble salts may damage roots, causing plant to die back. Leaves will drop if moved to low light or temperature drops below 45° F.