

How to Turn Clippings into Healthy Plants

Many plant owners are willing to sell a small clipping of their plant so you can grow your own baby plant. But many times we're left a little lost on how to turn clippings into healthy plants.

Clippings are by nature more delicate than full grown plants. Because of this, they will be more effected by the stress of transport and more likely to die if not cared for properly. The risk of this is greater if the clipping is not rooted.

The greatest chance of survival comes from knowing your plant and paying attention to its needs.

Determine whether your plant is rooted

Does your clipping have little white roots at the bottom? If it's rooted on arrival, there's a chance that you can place your clipping directly in soil. The shock of transport, however, will compound with the shock of transplant. Only do this with plants you know are hardy, and prepare yourself for a few days of sadness before it perks up again. If your clipping is not rooted, stick that bad boy in water and throw it on a sunny windowsill.

Give your clipping sun

Whether your clipping is rooted or not, this part is pretty crucial. I think we all know plants need sunlight to survive. After several days without, your clipping will be stressed and appreciate a nice sun bath. Whether you start with water or soil, make sure the sun can get to the leaves of your plant so it can start the process of photosynthesis immediately. This is what will rejuvenate your clipping.

Give your clipping water

Your clipping should have been sent in a moist medium like sphagnum moss, soil, a paper towel, or cotton. This is what kept it alive during transport - so make sure that as soon as you unwrap it, you replace that moisture. Water is the limiting factor when it comes to photosynthesis, so you will see plant death faster if you neglect to give it water.

Place your clipping in its home

The water and sunlight portion of clipping care should take at least several days. I always suggest a little extra light and water at first to get your plant thriving again. This is especially important and will take much longer if your clipping is unrooted - leave it in clean water (replace if needed) until you see 1-2 inch roots.

Once it's had a good drink and sun bath, move your plant to wherever its forever home will be. This should be a place with good light according to the plant's needs. Water should also be

given according to the plant's needs. For tropicals, a good rule of thumb is once the top 1-2 inches are dry. For succulents, when the soil is completely dry.

Leave it alone

This part is the hardest for loving plant owners. We just want to water and water and water... because that's how we show love to our plants.

Follow the directions for your plant. If they like dry soil, let them dry - or you'll be faced with a nasty case of root rot. If they look droopy, determine whether it's transplant shock (this can happen by just moving it to a different room), transport shock (after just unpacking), or if your plant is not getting the nutrients it needs.

Plants need time to adjust to new environments, just like people. Give them the time and care they need, and they will be thrilled to be a part of your burgeoning jungle.