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Indoor Plant Care CYCLAMEN

Taxonomic Name: *Cyclamen persicum*
Primrose Family
Herbaceous Plant

For many years, the cyclamen has been the aristocrat of indoor flowering plants. Its graceful flowers, held aloft on long stems, range in color from chaste white to hot pink and lurid red. They are offset most effectively by a dense cluster of heart-shaped leaves that are a noble dark green with silver markings. Getting cyclamens to re-flower after their initial blooming period is not the easiest task, and consequently cyclamens are often treated like garden annuals--to be discarded once the flowers fade. However, many plant lovers do manage to get a second spate of blossoms. The secret lies in giving your plant the exact conditions it needs to thrive (see below).

How to Care for Your Plant:

LIGHT DURING FLOWERING: Bright indirect sunlight is preferable--for example, near an unobstructed eastern or northern window. Cyclamens will often survive in artificially lit spaces for a while, but eventually they must be returned to natural light or they will languish.

WATERING DURING FLOWERING: Make sure the soil surface dries between waterings. When the soil surface is dry to the touch, water the plant thoroughly. At least a little water should come out of the pot's bottom drainage holes, but the plant should not stand in saucer water for more than thirty minutes.

FEEDING DURING FLOWERING: Use a high-phosphorus (high middle number) fertilizer at half the concentration and feeding frequency listed in the product directions.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Cyclamens need high humidity coupled with relatively cool conditions; a hot greenhouse or a south-facing windowsill will not do. If you want to get your plant to flower a second time, gradually reduce the watering frequency and let the leaves die back. Store the dormant plant's tuber (still in its pot and soil) in a cool place for several months. When the cyclamen begins to sprout anew, return it to bright indirect sunlight.

Warning: the plant's tuber is poisonous. Keep it out of the reach of young children and pets.