



## The Benefits of Houseplants

More than just beautiful, house plants enhance our lives by purifying / humidifying our air and making us happy!

**Plants That Help Purify & Humidify Air-** These house plants remove volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as formaldehyde, trichloroethylene and benzene (present in rugs, mattresses, vinyl, cigarette smoke, grocery bags, inks, carpet / adhesives, fire retardants, solvents and paints – just to name a few.) **All VOCs have been linked to allergy symptoms, immune suppression, and cancer.** These harmful agents are absorbed into the soil where root zone microorganisms convert VOCs into plant food. Keep a larger houseplant (6-in diameter) in roughly every 100 square feet of your home, office or classroom to help purify the air you breathe. NASA published a paper about this called the Clean Air Study, which is free online at [nasa.gov](http://nasa.gov). An added benefit of keeping houseplants is that they will help humidify the dry air that can cause itchy eyes and throat, coughs, or dry skin. Plants release 97% of the water that they take in – so a plant that you water more often will release water more often. Placing a group of plants close together increases their humidifying abilities.

**Increased Feelings of Wellness & Productivity-** Studies (I'm sourcing the following from Texas A&M AgriLife extension) have shown that plant life reduces stress and tasks performed under this calming influence of nature yield more accurate and better quality results. Workers with exposure to nature experience an increase in vitality which in turn increases the quality of their work. Flowers and beautiful ornamentals have shown a reduction in the anxiety and depression levels of those who keep them. Healing is accelerated in hospital patients who have views of nature – whether out the window or potted in their room. Children with exposure to nature learn better. Research has even shown that those who spend extended amounts of time around plants enjoy better relationships, because of increased feelings of compassion. Nurturing plants reduces stress levels and gives people a way to cope with their negative feelings.

Everybody loves flowers, and as stated above, they are great for those who lead stressful lives. There are tons of following houseplants! Ask any employee about any other questions with flowering houseplants or just houseplants in general.

The majority of plants flower, including succulents, air plants and carnivorous – usually, it just takes some extra love, lots of bright indirect light, phosphorus heavy fertilizer and humidity to push blooms. Some plants need extra special care to bloom, and it can be a fun and rewarding experience to research and encourage your plant to bloom.

However, any plant that you like should have a positive effect on your life. Watching something grow in your home, a place so different from the island, forest or desert where that plant originated, can be inspiring, comforting and fun. Plants have been around so, so much longer than we have – the planet just wouldn't be the same without them, and it only makes sense that keeping close to our roots would have a positive effect on our well-being.

**Some flowering houseplants:** Peace lilies, gerbera daisies, kalanchoes, Waffle plant, orchids, bromeliads, lipstick plant, goldfish plant, zebra plant, anthuriums... The list goes on forever!

**Some great air purifiers:** Dracaena, sansevieria (snake plant), fiddle leaf fig (ficus), multiple palms, peace lilies, pothos ivy, English ivy, aglaonemas (Chinese evergreen)... again the list goes on and on.