

Venus Fly Trap



BOTANICAL NAME: *Dionaea muscipula*
NATIVE TO : North & South Carolina, USA
HABITAT: Peaty bogs & wetlands

Venus Fly Traps are amazing plants which, instead of absorbing nutrients from the soil or air like most plants, consume insects & spiders for food. These are carnivorous plants. The 'mouth-like' part at the end of each stem is actually a leaf, modified to trap food so it can be absorbed by the plant. The 'teeth' are spaced apart to allow small insects to escape, while trapping larger visitors, so they can be digested. When triggered, traps can close quickly (in one tenth of a second), and will reopen when finished feeding over a 12 hour period.

LIGHT

Venus Fly Traps like very bright light, with some protection from the hot afternoon sun.

WATERING

These plants are very sensitive to chlorine. Tap water should never be used to water your plant. Instead, use distilled water. Venus fly traps like to be evenly moist. Instead of watering the soil surface, it is best to sit in a shallow tray of (distilled) water, allowing the soil to absorb what it needs to become properly moistened.

FEEDING

Venus Fly Traps generally take care of feeding themselves. Each side of the mouth has several tiny hairs, which when touched, cause the 'mouth' to close. Feeding begins when an insect contacts one of these hairs twice, or two or more of these hairs once. One feeding mouth will feed the entire plant. The plant only needs to feed a few times each year. Each leaf will close only three or four times, before dying so a new leaf can be produced. Teasing these plants to watch their mouths close is stressful for the plant, and should not be done frequently. If insects are not present, plants can be fed with a small amount of raw hamburger (about the size of a tomato seed).

CLEANING

Mature leaves, & those which have fed three or more times will turn brown & shrivel. These should be removed, and will soon be replaced with new ones.

DORMANCY

In winter, your plant needs to sleep. You should allow it to go dormant. Cut back the leaves to the soil surface, carefully remove the soil, & place in a zip lock bag in the refrigerator. After 60 days, it can be repotted in peat moss, watered, and returned to bright light. You will be amazed at how fast it grows!