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Repotting Houseplants

It is best to repot houseplants in late winter through spring if they are showing signs that their roots are being crowded. Repotting prevents plants from becoming pot-bound and improves water retention. By repotting in late-winter you are giving your plant room to expand its roots just as they are becoming more active.

Some signs that indicate it is time to repot are frequently wilting leaves, yellowing leaves near the bottom of the plant, roots visible near the surface or coming out of the drainage holes.

Following are easy steps that can help rejuvenate a stressed or overgrown plant:

- Remove the plant from its pot and gently shake or loosen the soil from the root ball. If the roots are too tightly woven together use a knife and score the root ball in a few areas to loosen the roots.
- Choose to repot your plant in a pot no larger than 2 or 3 inches larger in diameter than the pot it was in and preferably with a drainage hole. Pots too large may make it difficult for a plant to adjust to a new pot and could also prevent flowering.
- Place a small piece of moss, newspaper or anything porous over the drainage hole to prevent the soil from washing out when your plant is watered but will still allow water to drain.
- Select a lightweight potting mix for your plant. Place dry potting mix in the bottom of your container so that when you place the root ball on top of the soil the root ball is 1" from the top of your container.
- Continue to fill soil around the root ball until it reaches the level it was originally on the root ball before repotting. Gently press soil down and around plant with your fingers.
- Water well until water drains from the bottom of the pot. Pour out any excess water if there is any in the pots saucer.