

Lavant Horticultural Society

“House Plants – Growing & Origins” **Paul Abbott** 8th December 2021

Plants mentioned:

These very brief notes are far from complete, but hopefully may serve as an aide-memoire.

Clicking on the name of a plant will show a picture of it, mostly from websites that Paul recommended.

[Begonia rex](#): Need a lot of light, but not direct sun. Keep damp.

[Never-Never plant \(Ctenanthe\)](#): Right conditions will give better leaf markings. Bright indirect light. Keep damp.

[Peperomia](#): a large family of some 500 ornamental foliage plants. In the wild they grow in the wider Amazon region, preferably under trees where it's warm and shady.

Most common is [Peperomia Caperata](#); family also includes the [Happy Bean Plant \(Peperomia ferreyrae\)](#).

[Peace lily \(Spathiphyllum\)](#): Doesn't like over-watering. A little shade. Air purifier. Can't tolerate cold. Remove old bracts.

[Kalanchoe](#): Name derived from Chinese. Native to China and south-east Africa (particularly Madagascar).

[Echeveria](#): Will do OK in the garden in the south of England, if protected with fleece in winter. Often mistaken for a succulent. Survives heat and drought and partial shade, although it colours more in the sun.

[Calathea](#): Wide range available with many patterns.

[Mother-in-Law's Tongue \(Sansevieria\)](#): Easy to grow in any place in the home.

[Zamioculcas zamiifolia](#): “ZZ” plant. Semi-succulent. Likes to be pot-bound.

[Aloe vera](#): Native to tropical North Africa. Succulent. Healing properties. Likes to be pot-bound in indirect light. Propagation – spoon out plantlets with roots and pot up.

[Asparagus fern](#): Good for bathroom. Found in South and Central Africa and Asia. Member of lily family. Likes light, but not direct sunlight. Thirsty.

[Maidenhair ferns](#): Keep moist. Indirect light.

[Christmas cactus \(Schlumbergia\)](#): Succulent originating from the mountain rain forests of Brazil. Keep damp in a steady temperature.

[Epipremnum](#):

[Scindapsus](#): both climbers – need to be kept fairly damp

[Swiss cheese plant \(Monstera deliciosa\)](#): In house and in other places as well. Hardy. Keep fairly damp

[Weeping fig \(Ficus benjamina\)](#): In the wild are huge trees with buttress roots. Keep damp in indirect light.

[Kentia palm \(Howea forsteriana\)](#): From South Pacific – Lord Howe Island., hence Latin name. Parlour plant. Avoid bright light - OK if fairly dark. In the wild are large trees with palm tree shape. Easy to grow.

[Dracaena marginata](#): Quite forgiving. Slow growing. Varieties with various markings available.

[Ponytail palm \(Beaucarnea recurvata\)](#): Not too wet – just water once a month. Grows as large tree in the wild.

[Tillandsia cyanea](#): 500 known species from Central and South America and southern USA.

[Bromeliads](#): Suitable for conservatory or window sill. Epiphytes. Water into top of trumpets. Like it hot but indirect light.

[Pitcher plants](#)

[Living stones \(Lithops\)](#)

Planting & maintenance: Make sure the pot is the right size.
Do not plant too deep.
Options for feeding.

Propagation: Remove offsets with roots and pot up.
[Postage stamp cuttings](#) from leaves – make sure knife is clean.

Problems: Make sure to use clean pots.
Do not over-water
Do not over-feed
Inspect plants regularly
Check online.
Spraying weak washing up liquid solution can kill mealy bug and a lot of other pests, but is generally not effective on hairy plants.

Useful books: **“The House Plant Expert”** – *Good but somewhat out-of-date in that it may recommend treatments that are no longer available.*
by Dr. D. G. Hessayon
“Practical Encyclopaedia of House Plants” by Peter McCoy.

Useful websites: House of Plants <https://www.houseofplants.co.uk/>
Joy of Plants <https://www.thejoyofplants.co.uk/>
Haskins Garden Centre <https://www.haskins.co.uk/house-plants/>