



Know What You Grow!



Christmas Cactus

Scientific Name: *Schlumbergera bridgesii*

Its relative, the Thanksgiving Cactus (*Schlumbergera truncata*) is often sold as a Christmas Cactus in retail stores. Ways to tell them apart:

Christmas Cactus: softly scalloped edges, with pinkish-purple anthers.

Thanksgiving Cactus: serrated edges, with yellow anthers.

Source: [Desert Succulents](#)

Growing Information

Indoors or Warm Weather Plant

Generally considered a houseplant. During warm months, it can go outdoors to a sheltered, part-shade location. Be sure the temperature doesn't drop below 50 °F. or exceed 90°F. Outdoors not recommended for [USDA Plant hardiness zones 9 and above](#).

Source: [The Practical Planter](#)

Growing Guidance

Seeds: [Growing from seed](#) is possible, but it is much easier and more convenient to purchase one from a garden center.

Soil: Well-drained, with a mixture of potting soil, perlite and orchid bark.

Water: Keep the soil moist but never waterlogged. Do not allow it to dry out between waterings.

Pests: [Common pests](#) include aphids, fungus gnats, mealy bugs, red spider mites, soft brown scale, thrips and whiteflies.

Source: [The Spruce](#)



Interesting Facts

- The Christmas cactus is native to the shady rainforests of Brazil where it grows as epiphytes among trees branches.
- It is available in a wide variety of colors including red, rose, purple, lavender, peach, orange, cream, and white.
- Their pendulous stems make them a great choice for hanging baskets.
- Christmas cactus flowers best when slightly pot bound and doesn't often need repotting. (Once every three years at the very most.)
- With proper care, Christmas cacti can live for decades. One Montana family has passed down the same Christmas cactus for over 145 years!
- Although it is called "cactus", this plant needs to be kept away from any heat source.. The optimal temperature for this cactus to thrive is 68 degrees Fahrenheit).

Source: [Birds and Blossoms](#)

Contact Information



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Propagating



- Simply pinch off a few stem cuttings that have several segments, known as phylloclades. Let them dry out for a day or two to form a callus.
- Poke the cut end into a sterilized pot with moist potting soil. You can also dip the ends into a rooting hormone first.
- Set the pot in a warm location without direct sunlight. Keep the soil moist. There should be new roots in two to three weeks.

Source: [Garden Gate](#)

Encourage Your Plant to Bloom Again

Once your Christmas Cactus has finished blooming for the season, it's not difficult to "trick" it into blooming again. Here's how:

- Begin by limiting the amount of water the plant receives, around October or the first part of November. This will enable the plant to enter dormancy.
- Place the plant in a cool room where it will get at least 16 hours of dark each day. A window sill is perfect.
- Avoid placing the plant where it receives either cold or hot air drafts.
- After a month or so, the tips of the leaves should begin to grow, and buds should start to form shortly afterward. After buds have formed, it should be about four weeks before the first flowers begin to appear.

Source: [Garden Lovers Club](#)

Source for All Photos: AOL Images