



# Air Plants

## Air Plants - Tillandsias

Air Plants belong to the Tillandsia family, same as Bromeliads. Air plants come from a diverse range of habitats, ranging from deserts to rainforests. They are epiphytic which means they don't need to be grown in soil, instead they grow supported on tree branches in the canopy or rocky cliff faces.

They don't need to be potted as they don't have roots, the tiny roots that are sometimes produced are purely for anchoring to the growing surface. They absorb all nutrients and moisture through their scaly leaves. They come in a variety of colours and shapes.

Colours more commonly seen are silvery to green foliage, sometimes with red or pink tips. Plants can vary in size as well; they start as single strands then multiply to form large clumps/ clusters. Once plants have reached a certain size they will start to flower and produce pups from around the main plant. Flowers can be short lived but very showy, usually displaying a purple, red or pink colour.

### How to grow:

Air Plants require a bright draught free area out of the direct sunlight. They can be grown inside or outside, if grown outside, position in a sheltered spot that doesn't receive direct sunlight or frost. Watering requirements depend on what kind of air plant you have.

The leaves will be a good indication of how often you need to water. Thick rigid leaves will require less water, leaves with soft silvery scales need watering more often along with plants that have a richer green leaf. Water less in winter and more often in summer. Plants kept in cooler less bright areas will require less water and plants kept in sunnier warmer spots will require a bit more, a good average is to water once a week. Plants can either be thoroughly misted or soaked in water for 15 to 20 mins.

They need to dry out between watering. Plants that are kept wet will rot and eventually die. Mature plants can start to produce babies around the base will eventually form a clump. If desired, once the pups have reached around a third of the mother plant they can be divided up to make multiple plants.