



INDOOR PLANTS

# Chinese Money Plants

## **Pilea peperomioides**

Pileas come in many different shapes, textures, sizes and colours. *Pilea peperomioides*, known as the Chinese Money Plant or Friendship plant, is a striking indoor plant grown for its funky foliage.

They have round, lime green leaves that sprout from a central stalk which can reach 30cm tall. They have a peltate leaf, which means the leaf stem connects to the centre of the leaf, not at the bottom like most leaves.

At maturity, they have a delicate flower stalk that reaches up from the centre of the plant with tiny white flowers. They are one of the most popular indoor plants, that with a bit of know-how are easy to care for!

### **How to grow:**

Pileas need a bright area indoors (a windowsill is usually best). They can be grown outside in a shady position but only in the warmer months. It is important to make sure they don't receive too much direct sunlight on them as this can cause scorching on the leaves. It can be beneficial to rotate your plant every now and then to help it grow nice and straight. Plants left in the same position for too long tend to reach for the light and lose their symmetrical growth habit.

Pileas don't like to have wet feet, so when watering them make sure the water drains away freely and the pot isn't standing in the water for too long. Water when the top couple of centimetres of soil becomes dry (this is usually once a week in the warmer weather and less in the cooler weather). Watering requirements will rely on the conditions you have the plant in. Always test the soil before watering to make sure the soil isn't still moist from the last water.

Repotting can take place any time of the year but is best done in spring or summer when the weather is warmer. Pileas don't require huge pots, so choose a new pot that is the next size up. It is important to use a potting mix that is of premium grade with good drainage. Incorporating sand or perlite to the mix can be beneficial.

Apply a half strength liquid fertiliser during the warmer months.

Maintaining your *Pilea peperomioides* is easy. Once you have the position and watering down pat, a little bit of care goes a long way! Wiping the leaves with a damp cloth to remove dust will let the plant breathe.

Pileas often sprout offsets known as pups around the base of the plant, which when left to grow will create a bushier plant. Once the pups have reached a suitable size and established roots, they can be removed from the base of the plant and re-potted. Use a sharp knife and slice the plant away from the mother plant and place it in a potting mix with good drainage. The bigger the pup the better chance of survival.