



INDOOR PLANTS

Dracaenas

Dracaenas make up a large genus with a diverse range of species. Some of these species make for striking indoor plants, such as *Dracaena marginata*, *D. fragrans* 'massangeana' (known as the 'happy plant') and *D. deremensis* 'Janet Craig'.

How to grow:

Dracaenas prefer a warm spot with plenty of natural light. For outdoors, select a position that is protected from the afternoon sun in summer. They naturally drop leaves to form a cane which can be cut back to form a bushier plant. Otherwise, they can become tall specimen plants, so consider this when picking a spot for them.

Dracaenas do not like being water-logged, so only water when the soil is nearly dry. Dracaenas are slow growing, so they can stay in the same pot for many years. Use a potting mix with good drainage. Liquid feed during the warmer months to encourage new growth.

Dracaena marginata is one of the easiest Dracaenas to grow and will tolerate a variety of conditions. Grown in low light, this variety can become leggy and lean towards the light.

Try to avoid this by regularly rotating your plant. The foliage is long and thin, with leaf colour depending on the variety. As the lower leaves age, they turn yellow and drop off to form tall, woody stems. If leaves are dropping more rapidly, you might need to adjust your watering or check for spider mite. As a potted plant, they usually reach a height of around 2m.

Dracaena fragrans 'massangeana' is one of the larger leaved varieties, usually reaching a height of around 1.5m. They have long, green leaves with a lime to yellow stripe down the centre and a chunky, woody stem. These plants prefer a spot with protection from the hot sun.

Dracaena deremensis 'Janet Craig' has large, dark green, strappy leaves, with variegated forms also available. It grows to a height of 1-2m as a potted plant. They can be easily pruned to maintain a compact habit. Rotate the plant regularly to avoid a leaning habit.

If you've cut back your Dracaena and what you've removed is a healthy head of foliage on a stem, try to propagate it as a cutting during the warmer months by placing it in a moist, quality potting medium.