



CAT PALM • CHAMAEDOREACATARACTARUM • CATARACT PALMS

The Cat Palm, also called the Cascade or Cataract Palm is native to southeastern Mexico and resembles the inexpensive Areca Palm and the very pricey Kentia Palm. Indoors, the plant grows slowly, eventually reaching a height of 4-6ft. The Cat Palm requires a very tropical environment good indirect light and plenty of water. This is a very attractive plant that produces glossy, dark green leaves on thin shoots, but it does need care and attention.

CARE

LIGHT

Cat Palms need good indirect light but no direct sun.

WATER

Cat Palms like moist but not soggy soil at all times. Fronds turn yellow if the soil gets too dry. Salty water or water containing chemicals such as fluoride causes leaf tip burn; over watering causes entire fronds to turn brown.

FERTILIZER

Less rather than more plant food is always better with palms. Feed a Cat Palm monthly in the spring and summer with a balanced houseplant food diluted to 1/2 the recommended strength. Cat Palms only need fertilizer once or twice during winter and fall.

TEMPERATURE

Palms like heat but too much dry heat causes leaf damage. Avoid placing palms in drafts, in front of heaters or air conditioners, or in unheated rooms during the winter. The ideal temperatures are 80°F during the day and no lower than 45°F at night, but does adapt to being inside your home.

HUMIDITY

Lack of sufficient humidity is another reason a cat palm may develop brown tips. Ideally the room should have about 55% humidity, but this is rarely the case. You can place a humidifier in the room or place the palm on a wet gravel tray; just be sure the plant sits on the gravel and not in the water.

PESTS

Spider mites, scale, mealy bugs, and ants can all be a problem. You can treat with a household safe insecticide.

DISEASES

Helminthophobia, or leaf spot is a fungal disease that affects the leaves of a cat palm. It appears as a reddish-brown lesion between one-eighth to one-fourth inches in length.

SOIL

The cat palm requires a potting soil that drains quickly. Try adding peat moss to your regular potting soil to keep the soil light rather than heavy and clay-like.

POT SIZE

Palm plants like to be root- bound. Do not re-pot a cat palm until the roots have started to grow out of the bottom of the pot.

PRUNING

Cut off yellow or brown fronds quickly. Brown leaf tips can be trimmed but the fronds never look quite right after being trimmed.

PROPAGATION

Palms are propagated by seeds and propagation is best left to the professionals.

CLEAN AIR PLANT

Most palm plants clean the air of harmful chemicals.