

CLIVIA

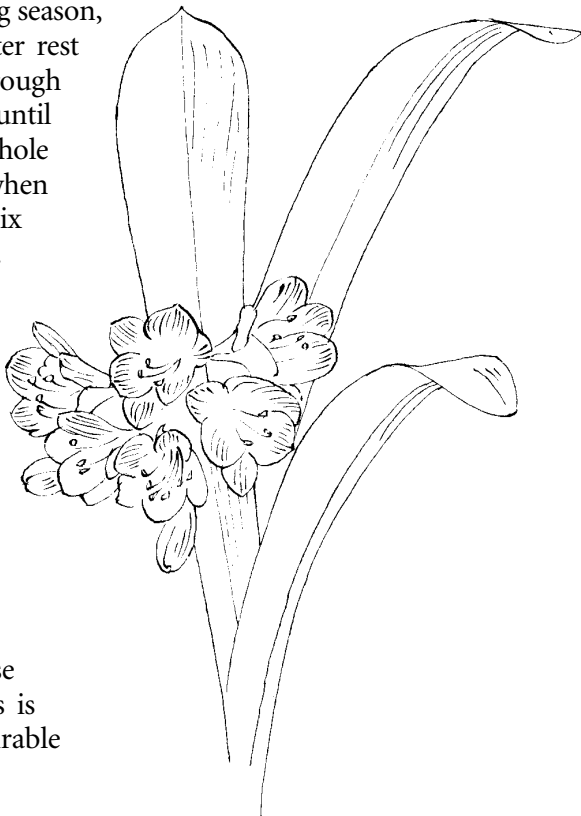
(*Clivia miniata*)

CULTURAL INSTRUCTIONS

Clivias have a well-earned reputation as rugged houseplants that demand very little attention. Follow these basic instructions for care, and your Clivia should remain healthy, increase in size, and bloom reliably once a year, sometimes more frequently.

LIGHT: Clivias grow best where they receive bright daylight but little or no direct sun—in a north-facing window, for example, or in an east- or west-facing window that is partially shaded by a deciduous tree. You can summer your plant outdoors in a shady location. Just remember to bring it back in before the first frost. Clivias won't endure temperatures that dip much below freezing.

WATER: During the growing season, which begins after the winter rest (see over) and continues through October, water thoroughly (until water drains freely from the hole in the bottom of the pot) when the top inch of the potting mix becomes dry to the touch. Clivias prefer to be kept on the dry side. Potting mix that remains constantly wet can cause rot, which is first manifested by the appearance of pale green or bright orange cankers on the leaves. We strongly suggest that you avoid a weekly watering regimen and instead water only when the plant requires it. Please note that misting the leaves is neither necessary nor desirable and can encourage disease.



WINTER REST: Clivias flower more reliably if given a period of rest beginning in late fall. For 12–14 weeks (about 3 months), keep the plant in a cool room (50–65°F is ideal) and withhold water. Keep a close eye on your plant during this resting period. If you see the plant begin to wilt, add a scant 1–2 cups of water, just enough to moisten the soil lightly. Begin normal watering (see “Water” over) at the end of the winter rest. Bloom usually, but not always, follows in 6–12 weeks.

FERTILIZER: During spring and summer, fertilize your plant monthly with a water-soluble fertilizer (20-20-20) mixed at ½ the recommended strength. Use restraint: More fertilizer is not better. Stop fertilizing by mid-September.

GROOMING: Cut flower stalks off at the base after the blooms have faded to prevent the plant from expending energy on the production of seeds. Also remove leaves that have withered and turned brown.

REPOTTING: Clivias tolerate considerable crowding of their roots and bloom best, in fact, when pot-bound. As a plant grows, some of the fleshy roots may push their way up above the potting mix. This is normal. Repotting is necessary only every 3–5 years. After bloom, lift the plant from its pot and place it in a new pot that is no more than 2 inches in diameter larger than the old one. Use a potting mix that drains well and that is composed of at least 50% organic matter, such as peat moss or fir bark. Most potting mixes sold at garden centers meet both requirements.

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