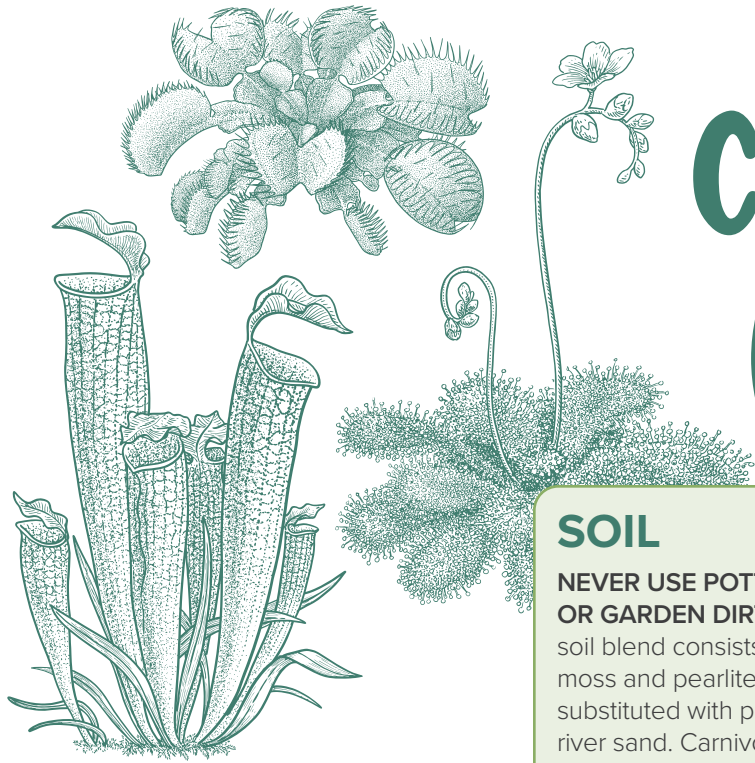




Dennis' 7 Dees Carnivorous Plant Care

SELECTION

BEGINNER PLANTS

- Sundews (*Drosera capensis*, *Drosera binata*)
- Pitcher plants (*Sarracenia flava*)
- Butterworts (*Pinguicula grandiflora*, *Pinguicula moranensis*)

INTERMEDIATE PLANTS

- Venus flytraps
- Asian pitchers
- Cobra lilies

INDOOR GROWING

(bright, sunny window facing east, west, or south)

- Tropical sundews (*Drosera capensis*, *Drosera spatulata*)
- Asian pitchers (*Nepenthes*)
- Mexican butterworts (*Pinguicula*)

OUTDOOR GROWING

(4–6 hours of sun or more)

- Venus flytraps
- Pitcher plants
- Cold-hardy sundews (*Drosera filiformis*), cobra lilies

OTHER DECIDING FACTORS

Sarracenia/pitcher plants are expert yellow-jacket catchers! Sundews, especially tropical varieties, are great in bright kitchen windowsills and love to trap and eat the fruit flies around composts and fruit bowls!

SUNLIGHT

There are many carnivorous plants for growing both indoors and outdoors, but they will not thrive in areas that receive less than **3–4 hours of direct sunlight daily**.

Flytraps and *Sarracenia* need more sunlight than they normally receive indoors and often die due to lack of sunlight. They are not recommended for indoor growing, unless given special attention (supplemental light and a chill period for dormancy).

SOIL

NEVER USE POTTING SOIL OR GARDEN DIRT!

The best soil blend consists of equal parts peat moss and perlite; perlite can be substituted with pumice or washed river sand. Carnivorous plants are sensitive to most plant fertilizers and minerals and prefer to get their vitamins from the bugs they eat!



WATER

Most carnivorous plants favor high humidity and **soil that is constantly moist, but not wet (bog-like conditions)**; best grown in a container with a large tray under the pot with plenty of water. They also prefer water with **no chlorine and low mineral content**; for best results, use distilled/filtered water or rainwater.

If growing in a pond or fountain, make sure the water level is no more than halfway up the pot to keep the crown of the plant above water. Some plants, like cobra lilies, prefer moving water over standing water.



FEEDING

Outdoor carnivorous plants usually catch plenty of insects and often do not need fertilizer. They are **sensitive to over-fertilization—feed only if necessary**.

Indoor plants may enjoy occasional fertilizer; use a urea-free formula for orchids or bromeliads and dilute to half the recommended strength. Do not feed meat to your plants; provide a freshly caught insect or just let them catch bugs on their own.



PESTS

Ironically, carnivorous plants can be prone to insect pests, especially aphids, scale, and mealybugs. Fungal diseases (mainly grey mold) can also occur with poor air circulation. **Neem oil is the ideal fix for both issues**—it works as an insecticide and a fungicide. Slugs can pose a concern for outdoor plants as well; use Slug Magic for best results.



REPOTTING

Although most plants can be repotted any time of the year, it is **best to repot in late winter or early spring** for the best-looking summer plants; be sure to use proper soil mix when repotting.



TEMPERATURE & SEASONS

COLD-HARDINESS

As winter approaches, hardy plants will slow in growth and eventually stop growing. They may retain leaves, but the leaves will turn brown around the edges; this is perfectly normal.

Most hardy carnivorous plants **require 3–4 months of winter dormancy** triggered by temperatures below 50°F and shorter daylight hours. Even while dormant, plants will still need to sit in a small amount of standing water to prevent the soil from drying out. Don't worry about overnight temperature dips as low as 20°F. While dormant, these plants can tolerate overnight frosts with minimal winter protection. However, they are very susceptible to freeze damage when grown in containers.

Protect plants if there are extended periods below 20°F or whenever there is a combination of freezing temperatures and wind, which can cause serious frost burn. To prevent frost burn, cover plants with black plastic or a tarp, or move them into an unheated garage or shed. As soon as the temperature climbs above 35°F, uncover your plants and allow them to continue dormancy outdoors.

Once temperatures begin to warm in early spring and plants begin to regrow, cut off all of the old foliage to make way for new growth and preserve ideal plant health.

HEAT TOLERANCE

Carnivorous plants are extremely heat-tolerant of a wide range of temperatures, but it is best to **avoid prolonged soil temperatures above 100°F**. To cool the roots in containers during extreme heat, water plants once or twice per day with cool water and/or move into area where roots receive less extreme temperatures.

