KANGAROO PAW FERN CARE

LIGHT

Kangaroo paw fern (Microsorum diversifolium) grows well in bright, indirect light near a north- or east-facing window. Protect its leathery, lobed fronds from strong direct sun. Let foliage arch over a pot or hanging basket, with enough room to avoid breaking leaves as people pass.

WATERING

Keep the mix evenly moist throughout the year, watering when the top surface begins to dry. Avoid letting the root ball become completely dry. Soak thoroughly, then let excess water drain and empty the saucer. Water a little less often in winter while continuing to check moisture.

SOIL

Use a loose, moisture-retentive houseplant mix with perlite or fine bark for drainage. A container with drainage holes is essential. Repot in spring when roots crowd the pot, moving up one size. Preserve the creeping rhizomes at the surface rather than burying them under deep layers of fresh mix.

TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Moderate room temperatures and humid air suit this fern. Protect from cold drafts, frost and heat blowing from vents. Higher humidity helps prevent brown tips; use a humidifier if winter air is dry. Gentle air circulation is useful, especially where foliage is dense.

FERTILIZING

Feed lightly about monthly during active spring and summer growth, using a liquid houseplant fertilizer at its labeled fern dilution. Pause feeding during winter rest. Do not add fertilizer immediately after repotting into a mix that already contains nutrients, and avoid applying strong feed to dry roots.

PESTS & GROOMING

Remove fully dead or damaged fronds with clean scissors. Inspect for scale, mites and mealybugs. Isolate infested plants and use only treatments labeled for ferns, testing a small area first. Brown tips may reflect dry soil or dry air; yellowing with soggy mix calls for checking drainage and roots.