KOREAN AZALEA CARE

LIGHT

Korean azalea (Rhododendron yedoense var. poukhanense), including Rosea and Compacta forms, grows in sun to partial shade. Provide afternoon shelter on exposed hot sites and leave room for a broad mound. Choose a site with good air movement and dependable root moisture, away from drying wind and heat-reflecting pavement.

WATER

Keep shallow roots evenly moist during establishment and dry summer or autumn weather. Water slowly, checking the root ball and nearby soil. Avoid chronic saturation. Mulch conserves moisture but does not replace watering checks before the soil freezes.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use acidic, humus-rich, well-drained soil and test pH before amendments. Set the root ball at or slightly above ground level. Mulch lightly without touching stems. Avoid deep cultivation among shallow roots and do not add lime automatically.

FEEDING

These shrubs need little fertilizer. Use soil-test results to guide a modest spring application for acid-loving plants if needed. Avoid heavy or late nitrogen. Yellow leaves may signal pH or drainage problems; diagnose the cause before repeatedly feeding.

SEASONAL CARE

Prune lightly just after flowering if shaping is necessary, removing dead, damaged, or rubbing branches. Preserve developing shoots when removing old flower clusters. Late pruning can remove next year's flower buds. Avoid routine shearing or hard annual cutting; allow the natural form and mature size to suit the planting site.

HELPFUL TIPS

Leaf retention varies with climate: Korean azalea may be semi-evergreen in milder places and deciduous in cold winters. Seasonal leaf loss alone is not evidence that the shrub has died. Spring flowers and autumn foliage color are normal features. Confirm the cultivar's mature size rather than assuming every plant labeled Compacta stays tiny.