



*For the joy of gardening!*

**Estabrook's**

# AUSTRALIAN TREE FERN CARE

## **LIGHT**

Australian tree fern (*Cyathea cooperi*, also called *Alsophila cooperi*) needs bright, filtered light. Protect the broad, delicate fronds from harsh direct sun and strong wind. Allow generous space overhead and around the plant; mature fronds become much larger than those on young nursery plants.

## **WATERING**

Keep the potting mix consistently moist but well drained. Water as the surface starts to dry, before the root ball dries throughout, and empty the saucer after draining. In hot, dry summer conditions, the fibrous stem also benefits from moistening. Avoid wetting the crown during cool winter conditions.

## **SOIL**

Use a humus-rich, moisture-retentive fern mix with good drainage. Choose a stable container with drainage holes. Repot when roots crowd the pot, moving up a modest size and preserving the root ball. Keep the growing crown clear rather than burying it in fresh mix.

## **TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY**

Grow indoors in Maine through winter, keeping temperatures above 50°F. Moderate household warmth, high humidity and gentle air circulation help prevent frond drying. Avoid heaters and cold drafts. Summer plants outdoors need a sheltered, partially shaded position and must return indoors before frost.

## **FERTILIZING**

Feed lightly about monthly during active spring and summer growth with a balanced liquid fertilizer at the labeled fern dilution. Reduce or stop feeding when growth slows. Apply to moist mix, avoiding strong concentrations that can damage tender roots.

## **PESTS & PRUNING**

Inspect fronds for scale, mealybugs and mites, using only treatments suitable for ferns. Remove fully dead or damaged fronds with clean tools, taking care around emerging growth. Never cut off the trunk or central growing point. Crisp fronds call for checking humidity, moisture and sun exposure.