

Gardenia

Also called cape jasmine
(*Gardenia jasminoides*)

One of the more difficult flowering houseplants, gardenia is still worth the effort for its glossy green foliage and waxy, scented flowers.

Light

Place in high light (southern exposure) in winter and medium (bright indirect) light rest of year. Place outdoors in filtered light in summer. Expose to artificial light during gray periods.

Water

Keep soil evenly moist, but never soggy. Do not let soil around roots dry out. Mist daily with tepid water. Raise humidity as high as possible by using humidifier or double-potting.

Temperature

Maintain temperatures in low 60s to encourage buds, but not below 70 degrees once buds form. Avoid cold drafts.

Comments

Use acid potting soil. Fertilize regularly, supplementing with iron chelate and one teaspoon of ammonium sulfate in one gallon of water. Pinch off buds after one flowering period when plant is still young. Remove spent blossoms. Prune to shape after flowering; may be trained into standard (tree form). Keep foliage clean. Propagate by cuttings taken from firm, new growth in late spring, or by seed anytime for some varieties.