

# Multiply Indoor Plants

Get fast results by separating small offsets from a full-size parent

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The fastest, most economical way to produce new houseplants is to divide them from existing ones. This technique works well with the commonly available indoor plants listed below. They multiply by offsets—little plants that form along the sides of the parent. The offsets are usually connected to the parent by a single root that's easy to sever.

You can replant the offsets in smaller pots to display around the house or to give as gifts. Or you could organize a party to make dozens of small potted plants to sell as fundraisers for schools or garden clubs.

How many offspring can you part from a parent? We separated three Chinese evergreen plants from a single parent. We know of one gardener who netted 14 new plants from a single *Spathiphyllum* in a 6-inch pot that cost \$6.95 at the supermarket.

Volume 0%

Once you've potted the divisions, treat them with extra care until their roots become established. Keep the soil consistently moist. Give them bright light but no direct sun. Don't fertilize new divisions for at least six months.

## DIRECTIONS

1. The night before you divide it, thoroughly soak the parent plant by placing it in a sink or bucket filled with water so that the top of the pot is just below the water.
2. Spread newspaper or plastic sheeting on a work surface. Carefully remove the plant from the nursery pot.

3. Gently shake excess soil from the root mass so you can clearly see the natural divisions between the offsets.
4. Pry the parent plant apart into individual divisions, as shown here, taking care to break as few roots as possible.
5. Immediately replant the divisions in 4-inch or larger pots filled with fresh potting mix. Three Chinese evergreen plants were separated from the parent pictured at left.
6. Water the divisions thoroughly to keep the soil evenly moist (but not soggy) until new roots form.

## **GOOD CANDIDATES**

Purchase plants in 6-inch or larger pots. The following tolerate low indoor light and require little care.

**Boston fern** (*Nephrolepis exaltata* 'Bostoniensis')

**Cast-iron plant** (*Aspidistra elatior* and *A. e.* 'Variegata')

**Chinese evergreen** (*Aglaonema modestum*)

**Haworthia attenuata** and *H. fasciata*

**Snake plant** (*Sansevieria trifasciata*)

**Spathiphyllum** (*S. wallisii* 'Clevelandii', *S.* 'Mauna Loa', and *S.* 'Sensation')

**Western maidenhair fern** (*Adiantum aleuticum*)