

# Mt Shasta Florist

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## Instructions: Care for Air Plants (Tillandsia)

Tillandsias are more commonly known as air plants due to the fact that they don't grow in soil. Air plants are the largest genus in the Bromeliad family and are native to warmer climates of the United States. They are epiphytic, and can be found growing on trees and rocks. The most unique thing about these plants is that they don't require any soil to live, they absorb all the nutrients they need through their leaves. Air plants are very hardy and can thrive in a wide range of environmental conditions with very little effort.

**Light** - In the home, air plants require bright filtered light and should be placed in close proximity to a bright window. If not possible, fluorescent lights will be a suitable alternative.

**Water** - Air plants should be watered two to four times a week, allowing to dry completely between waterings. If you notice the leaves starting to curl or roll, you are under watering your plant. This can be corrected by completely submerging your plant in water overnight, then resume a more frequent watering schedule. Softer, greener leaved plants will require more frequent watering and a bit less sun than gray or silver leaved plants.

**Fertilizer** - Fertilization is not a complete necessity, as they are sensitive to over fertilization and leaf burn. You can fertilize with a 10-5-5 water soluble plant food once a month. Dilute the fertilizer to  $\frac{1}{4}$  the normal strength.

**Ventilation** - Air circulation is very important to air plants. This allows them to dry out between waterings, prevent overwatering, and avoid diseases due to overwatering.

**Mounting** - Since air plants grow on trees and rocks in nature, mounting them is a great, fun option. You can mount them to almost anything, most commonly they are mounted to bark, driftwood, stones, cork, and pottery. Adhesive options include wire, hot glue, liquid nails, E6000, or Goop. Make sure not to cover the bottom of the plant, and to provide adequate drainage when watering.

**Terrariums** - you can either mist or sprinkle a few drops of water on the plant weekly in dry environments. And by misting your plant it will help raise humidity in the glass. When watering your terrarium use a turkey baster or eye dropper to control the amount of water and not disturb the landscape. Enjoy!