

Florida Foliage House Plant Care: *Spathiphyllum*¹

R. J. Henny and J. Chen²

Introduction

Most *Spathiphyllum* are seen in flower when at market (Figure 1). The attractive white blooms, called spathes, are long lasting. With proper plant care, *Spathiphyllum* may produce blooms year after year. *Spathiphyllum* is a very attractive house plant even when not in bloom and adapts well to home and patio environments.

Common names: Spathiphyllum, peace lily

Scientific name: *Spathiphyllum* spp.

Plant family: Araceae (the aroid family)

Indoor/Home/Office Cultivation Information

Light requirement: Bright, indirect light. No direct sun.

Soil preference: Rich, organic peat or bark-based, bagged potting soil.

Water requirement: Keep moist, but do not allow *Spathiphyllum* to sit in water.

Drought tolerant: Slightly tolerant.

Fertilizer requirements: Apply a low dose of liquid fertilizer according to manufacturer instructions three times per year.

Salt tolerant: No.



Figure 1. *Spathiphyllum* 'Sweet Pablo' in a 2-gallon container.
Credits: Gary Hennen

Temperature preference: Warm, tropical, 75°F–85°F.

Chill tolerant (55°F–35°F): Moderately tolerant; some cultivars can be injured at 35°F; active growth is reduced at or below 50°F.

Freeze tolerant (below 32°F): No.

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2. R. J. Henny and J. Chen, professors, Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Mid-Florida Research and Education Center, Apopka, FL 32703.

Pests: Mealybug, scale – Take a sample to your local UF/IFAS Extension agent to confirm identification and receive treatment instructions.

Outdoor Cultivation Information

Outdoor year-round planting: Okay for USDA Hardiness Zones 10B–12.

Soil preference: Well drained, amended with organic matter.

Light requirement: No direct sun.

Water requirement: Irrigate regularly; maintain moisture but provide drainage.

Drought tolerant: Slightly tolerant.

Fertilizer requirements: Apply a well-balanced, slow-release, pelletized fertilizer according to manufacturer recommendations during the warm growing season.

Salt tolerant: No.

Temperature preference: Warm, tropical, 75°F–85°F.

Chill tolerant (55°F–35°F): Moderately tolerant; some cultivars can be injured at 35°F; active growth is reduced at or below 50°F.

Freeze tolerant (below 32°F): No.

Pests: Mites, scale - Take a sample to your local UF/IFAS Extension agent to confirm identification and receive treatment instructions.

Notes: *Spathiphyllum* varieties are numerous and range in size from small plants in 4-inch pots to specimen sizes in 7-gallon pots or larger (Figure 2).

Availability: *Spathiphyllum* is readily available year-round at retail outlets, florists, garden centers, and nurseries.



Figure 2. *Spathiphyllum* 'Sensation' in a 7-gallon planter.
Credits: Jim Georgisus

Additional Resources

Watkins, J. V., and T. J. Sheehan. 1975. *Florida Landscape Plants, Native and Exotic*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.