

Midtown Carnivores

Plant Care Sheet

Dionaea – The Venus Flytrap

<http://www.midtowncarnivores.com>



GENERAL CARE: Place your plant's pot into a bowl or container, and add water to the container until the water is ~¼ of the way up the side of the pot. Place the pot and its bowl outdoors in an area of bright sunlight, away from roof overhangs or structures that block sunlight at different times of day. (Or, place the pot indoors under an artificial light source.) After the water has evaporated, add water again to the same level and proceed. See [WHAT TO EXPECT](#) below for winter care information. Though not necessary for survival, VFTs can be fed live insects, once every two weeks to a month, to improve its growth. Do not overfeed.

WATER: *Dionaea* plants require water with under 50 parts per million (ppm) of total dissolved solids (TDS). Steam-distilled water (available at pharmacies & groceries), reverse-osmosis water and collected rainwater are three recommended types. If using tap- or garden hose water, check its TDS level with a handheld meter to ensure that it is <50 ppm. NEVER use "nursery water," "spring water" or "mineral water" as these have added ions that will severely and irreparably harm your plants over time. (TDS meters are available on our online store under [SEEDS AND SUPPLIES: OTHER.](#))

LIGHT: Growing outdoors is an easy way of providing the right type of light for your plants. Sunlight is optimal, but placement is also important. Choose an open location where your plants can receive gradually increasing amounts of sunlight as the day progresses. (For a more controlled environment, fluorescent lighting can be used as an indoor alternative.) For several plants, a fluorescent ballast may be used, but for fewer plants, a desk lamp with a compact fluorescent tube (CFT) bulb should be fine. I recommend a "Daylight" spectrum bulb, rather than a "bright white" or "soft white." Plants should receive at least 14 hours of light per day. We advise using an outlet timer. Keep the plant 6"-12" away from the bulb, so that it receives enough light to thrive, but not so much heat that the leaves dry out.

MEDIA: *Dionaea* requires acidic, nutrient-poor growing media (soil), with good drainage to prevent root rot. A mix of sphagnum peat moss and perlite (1:1 ratio) is recommended. Pure long-fiber sphagnum moss may also be used. **NEVER use fertilizers**, Miracle-Gro products (including their peat moss and perlite) or gardening/potting soil, as these contain minerals that WILL kill your plants in a matter of days.

WHAT TO EXPECT: Plants will grow new leaves as they exit dormancy in early Spring. New leaves will grow from the plant's center. Some will form long, narrow, upright trap leaves when warmer; other types will form wider, ground-hugging leaves year-round. When older leaves will brown and die off, cut them off to prevent fungus. In autumn, the plant will slow its growth of new leaves and eventually stop before winter begins. (Or, **if using artificial light:** In late summer, gradually shift your plant to a sun-lit location, preferably outdoors, for it to acclimate to the shorter daylight period of winter.) This winter period of dormancy is **required** for long-term plant survival. The dormant plant will look harried, but this is normal. Shelter the plant in a cool, dark location for the winter, **watering only to keep media damp**, and bring the plant back out in mid-April to mid-May. In mid-Spring, a vertical flower stalk may emerge. For novice growers, we strongly recommend cutting off the stalk as soon as you detect it. If the plant is not in ideal condition, the creation of a flower stalk may severely deplete its energy and kill it.

For any questions, please contact us at any time:



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We also recommend the following from the [SEEDS AND SUPPLIES](#) section of our online store:

[CARNIVOROUS PLANT MIX #1](#)

[TDS METER](#)