

A decorative scene featuring a concrete wall. In the center, a large, square, distressed white frame contains the text "HOME IS WHERE THE HOUSEPLANTS ARE" in a black, sans-serif font. To the left of the frame, two identical silver metal hanging pots are suspended by chains, each containing a green plant. Below these, two small succulent plants in white pots with pink and yellow accents sit on a white shelf. To the right of the frame, a white pot with a green plant sits on the same shelf. In the foreground, a light-colored wooden desk holds a silver tripod desk lamp, a stack of papers, and two cylindrical containers filled with pens and brushes. A white chair with a silver handle is partially visible at the bottom center.

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With the rise of house jungles, “jungalows” and urban rainforests, indoor plants have exploded in popularity in the past couple of years. Now, instead of family photos and books lining shelves, it’s common to see a fiddle-leaf fig or a snake plant.

WRITTEN *by* SAMANTHA LUND

Much like the seasonal life of a plant, the indoor gardening trend comes and goes. Beginning in the early 2010s, the indoor cacti and succulent trend emerged, as people were looking for cheap, easy and low-maintenance plants to keep alive—much easier to live a hectic lifestyle with a succulent waiting for you at home rather than a pet. That trend evolved from low-maintenance cacti to bigger, more lush indoor gardens as new and young plant-fans grew in gardening confidence.

Then social media took over. With a flurry of Instagram accounts and hashtags, the urban “jungalows” became the latest styling trend—and even though it can be joked about as another millennial craze, there are some very real advantages that come with surrounding yourself with a green plant gang. The indoor jungle has taken over, and in 2017 Pantone’s “Color of the Year” was greenery.



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Above and beyond adding a pop of color to a space, living with plants can reduce stress and pain, help you sleep better, improve air quality, lower background noises and keep air temperatures down.

“Plants transpire, absorbing carbon dioxide and exuding oxygen in return,” Bellevue Club’s Garden Floral Manager Lisa Yost says. “Studies have shown that living plants in an interior space improve productivity.”

The recent boom of urban rainforests makes most plant-human relationship researchers excited that younger generations are most likely going to have a strong, lifelong connection to nature.

Now, you know you want to begin your own indoor paradise complete with spiraling vines and tiny succulents lining your kitchen window. But where do you start?

“Since light is the ultimate factor for success in growing plants indoors, any low-light-tolerant plant will perform better,” Yost explains. She suggests looking into Chinese evergreens (aglaonema), pothos (philodendron), dracaenas, snake plants (sansevieria) and last but not least, cast-iron plants (aspidistra). “However, if you have lots of natural light, you can successfully grow many different types of plants.”





When it comes to care and watering, Yost suggests new gardeners come up with a schedule, keep a simple checklist and err on the dry side. “I don’t know how many plants I have killed with kindness by overwatering.”

For example, Yost suggests choosing one day every week, or every other, depending on your plants, to make sure you water them, clean them and look for any little pests making your houseplant their home. She also suggests spending money on good soil as it’s akin to good nutrition in humans. “They also have life-spans like we do,” Yost says. “Don’t take it personally if a plant dies, even after many years of the same care.”

With a rise in gardening demand, there’s also been a rise in specialty gardening blogs, books and stores. It’s never been easier to get into growing something green.

“I suggest if you’re serious about growing plants, go to a reputable nursery with a trained staff to help you,” Yost says. Before you go, pick a place for your plant in your home so you know the amount of light exposure and plant size you’re looking for. “And of course, there is always the Internet with a plethora of knowledge right at your fingertips.” ■